

A
DISCOURSE
Concerning the
Being and Attributes of GOD,
THE
Obligations of Natural Religion,
AND THE
Truth and Certainty
OF THE
Christian Revelation.

In Answer to Mr. Hobbs, Spinoza, the Author of the Oracles of Reason, and other Deniers of Natural and Revealed Religion.

Being sixteen SERMONS Preach'd at the Cathedral Church of St Paul, in the Years 1704 and 1705, at the Lecture Founded by the Honourable ROBERT BOYLE Esq;

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D. D. Rector of St James's Westminster.

The Fourth Edition, Corrected.

There are added in this Edition, Several LETTERS to Dr CLARKE from a Gentleman in Gloucestershire, relating to the first Volume; with the Drs ANSWERS.

London. Printed by Will. Botham; for James Knapton, at the Crown in St Paul's Church-Yard. 1716.

A
DISCOURSE

Concerning the
Being and Attributes of GOD

THE
Obligations of Natural Religion

AND THE
Truth and Certainty

OF THE
Christian Revelation

In Answer to Mr. A. S. Spence, the Author of the Discourse
Reason and Sense of Nature, and Revelation
Being James SEYMOUR'S Sermon at the Cathedral Church
of St. Paul, in the Year 1712, and now, a second time
reprinted by the Author, A. S. SEYMOUR.

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D. D. Rector
of St. James's Church, London.

The Second Edition, Corrected.



Several Letters from a
Gentleman in relation to the
first Volume, written by
A. S. SEYMOUR.

London, Printed by W. B. Baskin, for James Knapton, at
the Office in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1715.

A
DEMONSTRATION
OF THE
Being and Attributes
OF
G O D:

More Particularly in Answer to
Mr *HOBBS*, *SPINOZA*,
And their Followers:

Wherein the Notion of *LIBERTY* is Stated,
and the Possibility and Certainty of it Pro-
ved, in Opposition to *Necessity* and *Fate*.

Being the Substance of Eight *SERMONS*
Preach'd at the Cathedral-Church of *St Paul*,
in the Year 1704, at the Lecture Founded by
the Honourable *ROBERT BOYLE* Esq;

By *SAMUEL CLARKE*, D. D. Rector
of *St James's Westminster*.

The Fourth Edition, Corrected.

Rom. I. 20. *For the Invisible things of Him from the Creatioⁿ
of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the thing^s
that are made; even his Eternal Power and God-head: S^o
that they are without excuse.*

London. Printed by *Will. Botham*, for *James Knapton*, at the
Crown in *St Paul's Church-Yard*. 1716.

A
DEMONSTRATION

OF THE

Being and Antiquities

OF

GOD

More Particularly in Answer to

MR. HOBBS'S SPINOSA

And their Followers;

Wherein the Notion of LIBERTY is Stated
and the Possibility and Certainty of it Pro-
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ion, being the Substance of Eight SERMONS
Preach'd at the Cathedral-Church of St Paul
in the Year 1704, at the Lecture Founded by
the Honorable ROBERT BOYLE.

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D. D. Rector
of St James's Westminster.



The Author's Preface to the Reader
is printed at the end of the Book, and
contains many curious and useful
Observations on the subject.

LONDON, Printed by W. A. Baskins, for J. & W. Hurd, at the
Close in St Paul's Church-Yard, 1705.

T O T H E

Most Reverend Father in God

T H O M A S

Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*,
and Primate of all *England* :

Sir *HENRY ASHURST*,
Baronet ;

Sir *JOHN ROTHERAM*, Knight,
Serjeant at Law ;

JOHN EVELIN, Esquire ;

Trustees appointed by the Ho-
nourable *ROBERT BOTLE*,
Esquire.

This Discourse is humbly Dedi-
cated.

A 3

TO THE

Most Reverend Father in God

THOMAS

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury
and Primate of all England:

SIR HENRY ASHurst
Baronet;

SIR JOHN ROTHERAM, Knight
Sergeant at Law;

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nourable ROBERT BOTLE,
Esquire.

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cated.

A 3

THE
PREFACE.

THere being already published many and good Books, to prove the Being and Attributes of God; I have chosen to contract, what was requisite for me to say upon this Subject, into as narrow a Compass; and to express what I had to offer, in as few Words, as I could with Perspicuity. For which Reason I have also confined my self to One only Method or continued Thread of Arguing, which I have endeavoured should be as near to Mathematical as the Nature of such a Discourse would allow: Omitting some other Arguments, which I could not discern to be so evidently

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vidently conclusive: Because it seems not to be at any time for the real Advantage of Truth, to use Arguments in its behalf founded only on such Hypotheses, as the Adversaries apprehend they cannot be compelled to grant. Yet I have not made it my business, to oppose any of those Arguments; because I think it is not the best way for any one to recommend his own Performance by endeavouring to discover the Imperfections of Others who are engaged in the same Design with himself, of Promoting the Interest of true Religion and Virtue. But every Man ought to use such Arguments only, as appear to Him to be clear and strong, and the Readers must judge whether they truly prove the Conclusion.

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The Contents



A
DEMONSTRATION
OF THE
Being and Attributes
OF
GOD:

More particularly in Answer to
Mr *Hobbs*, *Spinoza*, and their
Followers.



ALL those who either are, or pretend to be *Atheists*; who either disbelieve the Being of God, or would be thought to do so; or, which is all one, who deny the Principal Attributes of the Divine Nature, and suppose God to be an Unintelligent Being, which acts merely by Necessity; that is, which, in any tolerable
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Propriety of Speech, acts not at all, but is only acted upon: All Men that are *Atheists*, I say, in this Sense, must be so upon one or other of these three Accounts.

Atheism arises from stupid Ignorance: Either, *First*, because being extremely ignorant and stupid, they have never duly considered any thing at all; nor made any just use of their natural Reason, to discover even the plainest and most obvious Truths; but have spent their Time in a manner of Life very little Superiour to that of Beasts.

Or from gross Corruption of Manners: Or, *Secondly*, because being totally debauched and corrupted in their *Practise*, they have, by a vitious and degenerate Life, corrupted the Principles of their Nature, and defaced the Reason of their own Minds; and, instead of fairly and impartially enquiring into the Rules and Obligations of Nature, and the Reason and Fitness of Things, have accustomed themselves only to mock and scoff at Religion; and, being under the Power of Evil Habits, and the Slavery of Unreasonable and Indulged Lusts, are resolved not to hearken to any Reasoning which would oblige them to forsake their beloved Vices.

Or from false Philosophy. Or, *Thirdly*, because in the way of *Speculative Reasoning*, and upon the Principles of Philosophy, they pretend that the Arguments used against the Being or Attributes of God, seem to them, after the strictest and fullest inquiry, to be more strong and conclusive, than those by which we endeavour to prove these great Truths.

These seem the only Causes that can be imagined, of any Man's disbelieving the Being or Attributes of God; and no Man can be supposed to be an *Atheist*, but upon one or other of

of

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of these three Accounts. Now to the two former of these three sorts of Men; namely, to such as are wholly ignorant and stupid, or to such as through habitual Debauchery have brought themselves to a Custom of mocking and scoffing at all Religion, and will not hearken to any fair Reasoning; it is not my *present* Business to apply my self. The One of these, wants to be instructed in the first Principles of *Reason*, as well as of *Religion*; The Other disbelieves only for a present false *Interest*, and because he is desirous that the Thing should not be true. The One has *not yet arrived* to the use of his natural Faculties: The other has *renounced* them, and declares he will not be argued with, as a rational Creature. 'Tis therefore the third sort of Atheists only (namely those who in the Way of Speculative Reasoning, and upon the Principles of Philosophy, pretend that the Arguments brought against the Being or Attributes of God, do, upon the strictest and fullest Examination, appear to them to be more strong and conclusive, than those by which these great Truths are attempted to be proved;) These, I say, are the only Atheistical Persons, to whom my present Discourse be supposed to be directed, or indeed who are capable of being reasoned with at all.

Now before I enter upon the main Argument, I shall premise several Concessions, which these Men, upon their own Principles, are unavoidably obliged to make.

And *First*, they must of necessity own, that supposing it cannot be proved to be true, yet at least 'tis a thing very desirable, and which any wise Man would wish to be true, for the great Benefit and Happiness of Men; that

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of God very
desirable.*

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there was a God, an Intelligent and Wise, a Just and Good Being, to govern the World. Whatever Hypothesis these Men can possibly frame; whatever Argument they can invent, by which they would exclude God and Providence out of the World; That very Argument or Hypothesis, will of necessity lead them to this Concession. If they argue, that our Notion of God arises not from Nature and Reason, but from the Art and Contrivance of *Politicians*; That Argument it self forces them to confess, that 'tis manifestly for the Interest of Humane Society, that it should be believed there is a God. If they suppose that the World was made by *Chance*, and is every Moment subject to be destroyed by Chance again; no Man can be so absurd as to contend, that 'tis as comfortable and desirable to live in such an uncertain State of things,

* *Maria ac Terras Cælumq;
Una dies dabit exitio, mul-
tosq; per annos
Sustentata ruet moles & ma-
china Mundi.*

— *Dictis dabit ipsa fi-
dem res
Forſitan, & graviter terra-
rum motibus orbis
Omnia conquassari in parvo
tempore cernes.*

Lucret. Lib. 5.

and * so continually liable to Ruin, without any Hope of Renovation; as in a World that were under the Preservation and Conduct of a powerful, Wise and Good God. If they argue against the Being of God, from the *Faults* and Defects which they imagine they can find in the Frame and Constitution of the *Visible* and *Material* World; this Supposition obliges them to acknowledge, that it would have been better the World had been made by an Intelligent and Wise Being, who might have prevented all Faults and Imperfections. If they argue against Providence, from the Faultiness and Inequality which they think they discover

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discover in the Management of the *Moral* World; this is a plain Confession, that 'tis a thing more fit and desirable in it self, that the World should be governed by a Just and Good Being, than by mere Chance or Unintelligent Necessity. Lastly, If they suppose the World to be eternally and necessarily *Self-existent*; and consequently that every thing in it, is established by a Blind and Eternal Fatality; No rational Man can at the same time deny, but that Liberty and Choice, or a Free Power of Acting, is a more eligible State, than to be determined thus in all our Actions, as a Stone is to move downward, by an absolute and inevitable Fate. In a word, which way soever they turn themselves, and whatever Hypothesis they make, concerning the Original and Frame of Things; Nothing is so certain and undeniable, as that *Man*, considered without the Protection and Conduct of a Superior Being, is in a far worse Case; than upon Supposition of the Being and Government of God, and of Mens being under his peculiar Conduct, Protection and Favour. *Man*, of himself, is infinitely insufficient for his own Happiness: * *He is liable to many Evils and Miseries,* * *Arch-Bp. Tillotson's Sermon on Job 28.* *which he can neither prevent nor redress: He is full of Wants which he cannot supply, and compassed about with Infirmities which he cannot remove, and obnoxious to Dangers which he can never sufficiently provide against: He is secure of nothing that he enjoys in this World, and uncertain of every thing that he hopes for: He is apt to grieve for what he cannot help, and eagerly to desire what he is never likely to obtain, &c.* Under which evil Circumstances 'tis manifest there can be no sufficient Support, but in the

Belief of a Wise and Good God, and in the Hopes which true Religion affords. Whether therefore the Being and Attributes of God can be *demonstrated* or not; it must at least be confessed by all rational and wise Men, to be a thing very *Desirable*, and which they would heartily *Wish* to be true, that there were a God, an Intelligent and Wise, a Just and Good Being, to Govern the World.

Now the Use I desire to make of this Concession, is only this: That since the Men I am arguing with, are unavoidably obliged to confess, that 'tis a thing very desirable at least, that there should be a God; they must of necessity, upon their own Principles, be very willing, nay, desirous above all things, to be convinced that their present Opinion is an Error, and sincerely hope that the contrary may be demonstrated to them to be true; and consequently they are bound with all seriousness, attention and impartiality, to consider the weight of the Arguments, by which the Being and Attributes of God may be proved to them.

*Scoffing at
Religion,
inexcusable.*

Secondly, All such Persons as I am speaking of, who profess themselves to be Atheists, not upon any present Interest or Lust, but purely upon the Principles of Reason and Philosophy; are bound by these Principles to acknowledge, that all mocking and scoffing at Religion, all jesting and turning Arguments of Reason into Drollery and Ridicule, is the most unmanly and unreasonable thing in the World: And consequently they are obliged to exclude out of their Number, as Irrational and Self-condemned Persons, and unworthy to be argued with, all such Scoffers at Religion, who de-
ride

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ride at a venture without hearing Reason; and who will not use the Means, of being convinced and satisfied. Hearing the Reason of the Case with Patience and Unprejudicedness, is an Equity which Men owe to every Truth that can in any manner concern them; and which is necessary to the Discovery of *every Kind of Error*: How much more, in things of the utmost Importance!

Thirdly, Since the Persons I am discoursing *Virtue and* to, cannot but own, that the Supposition of *good Man-* the Being of God, is in it self most desirable, *ners abso-* and for the benefit of the World, that it should *lutely ne-* be true; They must of Necessity grant further, *cessary* that supposing the Being and Attributes of God, to be things not indeed Demonstrable to be true, but only *Possible*, and such as cannot be demonstrated to be false; as most certainly they cannot: And much more, supposing them once made to appear *Probable*, and but more likely to be true, than the contrary Opinion: Nothing is more evident, even upon these Suppositions only, than that Men ought in all reason to live piously and virtuously in the World; and that Vice and Immorality are, upon all Accounts, and under all Hypotheses, the most absurd and inexcusable Things in Nature.

Thus much being premised, which no Atheist who pretends to be a rational and fair Inquirer into Things, can possibly avoid granting; (and other Atheists, I have before said, are not to be disputed with at all; as being Enemies to *Reason*, no less than to *Religion*, and therefore absolutely Self-condemned:) I proceed now to the main Thing I at first proposed; namely, to endeavour to show,

A Demonstration of the

to such considering Persons as I have already described, that the Being and Attributes of God, are not only possible or barely probable in themselves, but also strictly demonstrable to any unprejudiced Mind, from the most uncontestable Principles of right Reason.

And here, because the Persons I am at present dealing with, must be supposed not to believe any Revelation, nor acknowledge any Authority which they will submit to, but only the bare force of Reasoning: I shall not, at this time, draw any Testimony from Scripture, nor make use of any sort of Authority, nor lay any stress upon any popular Arguments in the Matter before us; but confine my self to the Rules of strict and demonstrative Argumentation.

Now many Arguments there are, by which the Being and Attributes of God have been undertaken to be *Demonstrated*: And perhaps most of those Arguments, if thoroughly understood, rightly stated, fully pursued, and duly separated from the false or uncertain Reasonings which have sometimes been intemix'd with them, would at length appear to be substantial and conclusive. But because I would endeavour, as far as possible, to avoid all manner of perplexity and confusion; therefore I shall not at this Time use any Variety of Arguments, but endeavour by One clear and plain Series of Propositions necessarily connected and following one from another, to demonstrate the Certainty of the Being of God, and to deduce in order the Necessary Attributes of his Nature, so far as by our Finite Reason we are enabled to discover and apprehend them. And because it is not to my present

sent purpose to explain or illustrate things to Them that Believe, but only to convince Unbelievers, and settle them that Doubt, by strict and undeniable Reasoning; therefore I shall not allege any thing, which however really true and useful, may yet be liable to contradiction or dispute; but shall endeavour to urge such Propositions only, as cannot be denied without departing from that Reason, which all Atheists pretend to be the Foundation of their Unbelief. Only it is absolutely Necessary before all Things, that they consent to lay aside all manner of Prejudices; and especially such, as have been apt to arise from the too frequent Use of *Terms of Art*, which have no *Idea's* belonging to them; and from the common receiving certain *Maxims of Philosophy* as true, which at the Bottom seem to be only *Propositions without any Meaning or Signification at all*.

I. First then, it is Absolutely and Undenia-
bly certain, that *Something has Existed from all* ^{Something must have Existed from Eternity.}
Eternity. This is so evident and undeniable
a Proposition, that no Atheist in any Age has
ever presumed to assert the contrary; and
therefore there is little need of being par-
ticular in the Proof of it. For since Some-
thing Now Is; 'tis manifest that Something
always Was; Otherwise the Things that
Now Are, must have risen out of Nothing,
absolutely and without Cause: Which is a
plain Contradiction in Terms. For, to say a
thing is produced, and yet that there is no
Cause at all of that Production, is to say that
Something is *Effected* when it is *Effected by No-*
thing, that is, at the same time when it is *not*
Effected at all. Whatever Exists, has a Cause
of its Existence, either in the Necessity of its

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own Nature; and then it must have been of it self Eternal: Or in the Will of some other Being; and then That Other Being must, at least in the Order of Nature and Causality, have Existed before it.

Of the Difficulty of Conceiving Eternity.

That *Something* therefore *has really Existed from Eternity*, is one of the certainest and most evident Truths in the World; acknowledged by all Men, and disputed by none. Yet as to the *Manner* How it can be; there is nothing in Nature more difficult for the Mind of Man to conceive, than this very first Plain and Self-evident Truth. For, *How any thing can have existed eternally*; that is, *How an Eternal Duration can Now be actually Past*; is a thing utterly as impossible for our narrow Understandings to comprehend, as any thing that is not an express Contradiction can be imagined to be: And yet to deny the Truth of the Proposition, that *an Eternal Duration is now actually past*; would be to assert *something still far more Unintelligible*, even a real and express Contradiction.

Difficulties arising merely from the Nature of Eternity, not to be regarded, because equal in all Suppositions.

The use I would make of this Observation, is This. That since in all Questions concerning the Nature and Perfections of God, or concerning any Thing to which the Idea of Eternity or Infinity is joined; tho' we can indeed Demonstrate certain Propositions to be true, yet 'tis impossible for us to comprehend or frame any adæquate or complete Ideas of the *Manner* How the Things so demonstrated can Be: Therefore when once any Proposition is clearly demonstrated to be true; it ought not to disturb us, that there be perhaps perplexing Objections on the other side, which for want of adæquate Ideas of the Manner of the Existence of the Things demonstrated, are not

casy

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easy to be cleared. Indeed, were it possible there should be any Proposition which could equally be *Demonstrated* on *both* sides of the Question, or which could on *both* sides be reduced to imply a *Contradiction*; (as some have too inconsiderately asserted;) This, it must be confessed, would alter the Case: Upon this absurd Supposition, all Difference of True and False, all Thinking and Reasoning, and the use of all our Faculties, would be entirely at an End. But when to Demonstration on the one side, there are opposed on the other, only Objections raised from our want of having adequate Ideas of the Things themselves; this ought not to be esteemed a Real Difficulty. 'Tis directly and clearly Demonstrable, that Something has been from Eternity: All the Objections therefore raised against the Eternity of any thing, grounded merely on our want of having an adequate Idea of Eternity; ought to be looked upon as of no real Solidity. Thus in other the like Instances: 'Tis Demonstrable, for Example, that Something must be actually Infinite: All the Metaphysical Difficulties therefore, which arise usually from applying the Measures and Relations of Things Finite, to what is Infinite; and from supposing *Finites* to be [Aliquot] *Parts* of *Infinite*, when indeed they are not properly so, but only as Mathematical Points to Quantity, which have no Proportion at all; (and from imagining All *Infinities* to be *Equal*, when in things *disparate* they manifestly are not so; an *infinite Line*, being not only *not equal* to, but *infinitely less* than an *infinite Surface*; and an *infinite Surface*, than *Space infinite in all Dimensions*;) All Metaphysical Difficulties, I say, arising from false Suppositions of this Kind;

ought to be esteemed vain and of no force. Again, 'tis in like manner Demonstrable, that Quantity is infinitely Divisible: All the Objections therefore raised, by supposing the *Sums total of a l Infinites* to be *Equal*, when in *disparate Parts* they manifestly are not so; and by comparing the imaginary *Equality or Inequality of the Number* of the Parts of Unequal Quantities, whose Parts have really *no Number at all*, they all having Parts *without Number*; ought to be lookt upon as weak and altogether inconclusive: To ask whether the Parts of unequal Quantities be *equal in Number* or not, when they have *no Number at all*; being the same thing as to ask whether two infinite Lines be *equal in length*, or not; that is, whether they *End together*, when neither of them have *any End at all*.

There must
have exist-
ed from E-
ternity One
Indepen-
dent Being.

II. *There has Existed from Eternity † Some One Unchangeable and Independent Being.* For since Something must needs have been from Eternity; as hath been already proved, and is

† The meaning of this Proposition (and all that the Argument here requires,) is, that there must needs have Always been *Some independent Being, Some One at least*. To show that there can be *no More than One*, is not the Design of this Proposition, but of the *Seventh*.

granted on all Hands: Either there has always Existed some one Unchangeable and Independent Being, from which all other Beings that are or ever were in the Universe, have receiv'd their Original; or else there has been an infinite Succession of changeable and dependent Beings produced one from another in an endless Progression, without any Original Cause at all. Now this latter Supposition is so very absurd, that tho' all Atheism must in its Account of most things (as shall be shown hereafter) terminate in

in it, yet I think very few Atheists ever were so weak as openly and directly to defend it. For it is plainly impossible and contradictory to it self. I shall not argue against it from the *supposed* Impossibility of Infinite Succession, *barely and absolutely considered in it self*; for a Reason which shall be mentioned hereafter. But, if we consider such an infinite Progression, as *One* entire Endless Series of *Dependent* Beings; 'tis plain this *whole* Series of Beings can have no Cause *from without*, of its Existence; because in it are supposed to be included *all Things* that are or ever were in the Universe: And 'tis plain it can have no Reason *within it self*, of its Existence; because no *One* Being in this Infinite Succession is supposed to be Self-existent or *Necessary*, (which is the only Ground or Reason of Existence of any thing, that can be imagined *within the thing it self*, as will presently more fully appear,) but every one *Dependent* on the foregoing: And where *no Part* is necessary, 'tis manifest *the whole* cannot be necessary; Absolute Necessity of Existence, not being an outward, *relative*, and accidental Determination; but an inward and essential Property of the Nature of the Thing which so Exists. An infinite Succession therefore of merely *Dependent* Beings, without any Original Independent Cause; is a *Series* of Beings, that has neither Necessity nor Cause, nor any Reason *at all* of its Existence, neither *within it self* nor *from without*: that is, 'tis an express Contradiction and Impossibility; 'tis a supposing *Something* to be *caused*, (because it's granted in every one of its Stages of Succession, not to be necessarily and from it self,) and yet that in
the

A Demonstration of the

whole, it is caused *absolutely* by *Nothing*: Which every Man knows is a Contradiction to imagin done *in Time*; and because Duration in this Case makes no Difference, 'tis equally a Contradiction to suppose it done *from Eternity*: And consequently there must *on the contrary*, of Necessity have Existed from Eternity, some One Immutable and *Independent* Being.

Ortherwise, Thus. Either there has always existed some One Unchangeable and *Independent* Being, from which all other Beings have received their Original; or else there has been an infinite Succession of changeable and *dependent* Beings, produced one from another in an endless Progression, without any Original Cause at all. According to this latter Supposition, there is Nothing in the Universe, Self-Existent or Necessarily-existing. And it so; then it was originally equally possible, that from Eternity there should never have existed any thing at all; as that there should from Eternity have existed a Succession of changeable and dependent Beings. Which being supposed; then *What* is it that has from Eternity determined such a Succession of Beings to exist, rather than that from Eternity there should never have existed any thing at all? *Necessity* it was not; because it was equally possible, in this Supposition, that they should not have existed at all: *Chance*, is nothing but a mere Word, without any Signification: and *Other Being* it is supposed there was none, to determine the Existence of these. Their Existence therefore was determined by *Nothing*; neither by any Necessity in the nature of the Things themselves, because it is supposed that none of them are Self-existent;

nor

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nor by an Other Being, because no Other is supposed to Exist. That is to say; Of two equally possible things, (*viz.* whether *anything* or *nothing* should from Eternity have existed,) the one is determined, rather than the other, *absolutely by Nothing*: Which is an express Contradiction: And consequently, as before, there must on the contrary, of Necessity have existed from Eternity, some *One* Immutable and Independent Being. Which, what it is, remains in the next place to be inquired.

III. *That unchangeable and Independent Being, The One which has Existed from Eternity, without any external Cause of its Existence; must be Self-Existent, that is, Necessarily existing.* For whatever Exists, must either have come into Being out of Nothing, absolutely without Cause; or it must have been produced by some External Cause; or it must be Self-Existent. Now to arise out of Nothing, absolutely without any Cause; has been already shown to be a plain contradiction. To have been produced by some External Cause, cannot possibly be true of every thing; but Something must have existed Eternally and Independently; as has likewise been shown already. It remains therefore, that That Being which has existed Independently from Eternity, must of Necessity be Self-existent. Now to be *Self-existent*, is not, to be *Produced by it self*; for That is an express Contradiction: But it is, (which is the only Idea we can frame of Self-existence, and without which the Word seems to have no Signification at all :) It is, I say, *to exist by an Absolute Necessity originally in the Nature of the Thing it self.* And this Necessity, must be *Antecedent*; not indeed

deed in Time, to the Existence of the Being it self; because That is Eternal: but it must be *Antecedent* in the Natural Order of our Ideas, to our *Supposition* of its Being: That is; This Necessity must not barely be *consequent* upon our Supposition of the Existence of such a Being; (For then it would not be a Necessity *Absolutely* such in it self, nor be the Ground or Foundation of the Existence of any thing, being on the contrary only a Consequent of it;) But it must *antecedently* force it self upon us, whether we will or no, even when we are endeavouring to suppose that no such Being Exists. For Example: When we are endeavouring to suppose that there is *no Being* in the Universe that exists Necessarily; we always find in our Minds, (besides the foregoing Demonstration of Something being Self-existent, from the Impossibility of every Thing's being dependent;) We always find in our Minds, I say, some Ideas, as of *Infinity* and *Eternity*; which to remove, that is, to suppose that there is no Being, no Substance in the Universe, to which these Attributes are necessarily inherent, is a Contradiction in the very Terms. For Attributes exist only by the Existence of the Substance to which they belong. Now He that can suppose Eternity and Immensity (and consequently the Substance by whose Existence these Attributes exist) removed out of the Universe; may, if he please, as easily remove the Relation of Equality between twice two and four.

From hence it follows.

1st. That *the only true Idea of a Self-existent or Necessarily Existing Being, is the Idea of a Being, the Supposition of whose Not-existing is an express*

*The True
Notion of
Self-Exis-
tence.*

pag. 12
C^c.

express Contradiction. For since 'tis absolute-
ly impossible but there must be Somewhat¹⁵
Self-existent; that is, which exists by the Ne-
cessity of its own Nature; 'tis plain, that
That Necessity cannot be a Necessity conse-
quent upon any foregoing Supposition, (be-
cause Nothing can be Antecedent to that
which is Self-Existent, no not its own *Will*,
so as to be the Cause of its own Existence,)
but it must be a Necessity *absolutely* such in
its own Nature. Now a Necessity, not *rela-*
tively or *consequentially*, but *absolutely* such in
its own Nature; is nothing else, but its be-
ing a plain Impossibility or Implying a Con-
tradiction to suppose the contrary. For in-
stance; the Relation of Equality between
twice two and four, is an absolute Necessity;
only because it is an immediate Contradiction
in Terms to suppose them unequal. This is
the only Idea we can frame, of an abso-
lute Necessity; and to use the Word in any
other Sense, seems to be using it without a-
ny Signification at all.

If any One now asks, what sort of Idea the
Idea of that Being is, the Supposition of
whose Not-Existing is thus an express Contra-
diction: I answer, 'Tis the First and Sim-
plest Idea we can possibly frame, or rather
which (unless we forbear thinking at all) we
cannot possibly extirpate or remove out of
our Minds, of a *most Simple Being, absolutely*
Eternal and Infinite, Original and Independent.
For, that he who supposes there is no *Original*
Independent Being in the Universe supposes
a Contradiction; has been shown already.^{pag. 12.}
And that he who supposes there may possibly
be no *Eternal and Infinite* Being in the Uni-
verse

verse, supposes likewise a Contradiction, is evident from hence; (besides that these two Attributes do necessarily follow from Self-original Independent Existence, as shall be shown hereafter;) that when he has done his utmost, in endeavouring to imagine that no such Being Exists; he cannot avoid imagining an Eternal and Infinite *Nothing*; that is, he will imagine Eternity and Immensity removed out of the Universe, and yet that at the same time they still continue there.

*The Error
of the Car-
tesians.*

This Argument, the *Cartesians* who supposed the Idea of *Immensity* to be the Idea of *Matter*, have been greatly perplexed with. For (however in *Words* they have contradicted themselves, yet in *Reality*) they have more easily been driven to that most intolerable Absurdity, of

asserting *Matter* * to be a Necessary Being; than been able to remove out of their Minds the Idea of *Immensity*, as Existing Necessarily and inseparably from Eternity. Which Absurdity and inextricable Perplexity of theirs, in respect of the Idea of *Immensity*, shows that they found *That* indeed to be Necessary and impossible to be removed; but, in respect of *Matter*, 'twas only a perverse applying an Idea to an Object whereto it no ways belongs. For, that it is indeed absolutely impossible and contradictory to suppose *Matter* necessarily existing, shall be demonstrated presently.

* *Puto implicare contradictionem, ut Mundus sit finitus: i. e.* I think it implies a Contradiction, for the World to be Finite: *Cartes. Epist. 69, prima Partis.*

And his Follower Mr *Regis*: *Mais peut etre* (saith he) *que je raisonne mal &c. i. e.* But perhaps I argue ill, when I conclude that the Property my Idea hath to represent Extension, [that is, in the Sense of the *Cartesians*, *Matter*,] comes from Extension it self as its Cause; For, what hinders me from believing that if this Property comes not from my self, yet at least it may come from some Spirit [or Being] Superiour to me, which produces in me the Idea of Extension, though Extension does not actually exist? Yet

2dly,

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when I consider the thing attentively, I find that my Conclusion is good; and that no Spirit [or Being] how excellent soever, can cause the Idea which I have of Extension to represent to me Extension rather than any thing else, if Extension does not actually Exist; because if he should do so, the Idea which I should then have of Extension, would not be a representation of Extension, but a representation of Nothing; which is impossible.

But it may be I still deceive my self, when I say that the Idea I have of Extension, supposes an Object actually existing; For it seems that I have Ideas, which do not suppose any Object: I have, for Example, the Idea of an Enchanted Castle; though no such thing really Exists. Yet when I consider the Difficulty still more attentively; I find there is this difference between the Idea of Extension, and that of an Enchanted Castle; that the first being natural, that is, independent on my Will, supposes an Object which is necessarily such as it represents; whereas the other being artificial, supposes indeed an Object, but it is not necessary that That Object be absolutely such as the Idea represents, because my Will can add to that Object, or diminish from it, as it pleases; as I have before said, and as shall be proved hereafter, when I come to treat of the Origin of Ideas. *Regis Metaphys. Lib. I. Par. 1. Chap. 3.*

2dly. From hence it follows, That *there Nothing so is no Man whatsoever, who makes any use of his certain, as Reason, but may easily become more certain of the Existence of a the Being of a Supreme Independent Cause, than Supreme] he can be of any thing else besides his own Existence. Independent Cause.* For how much Thought soever it may require to demonstrate the Other Attributes of such a Being, as it may do to demonstrate the greatest Mathematical Certainties; (of which more hereafter :) Yet as to its *Existence*; that there *Is* Somewhat Eternal, Infinite, and Self-existing, which must be the Cause and Original of all other Things; this is one of the First and most natural Conclusions, that any Man, who thinks at all, can frame in his Mind: And no Man can any more doubt of this, than he can doubt whether twice two be equal to four. 'Tis possible indeed a Man may in some Sense be ignorant of this first and plain Truth, by being utterly stupid, and

C 2

not

A Demonstration of the

not thinking at all: (For though it is absolutely impossible for him to imagine the contrary, yet he may possibly neglect to conceive this: Tho' no Man can possibly Think that twice two is not four, yet he may possibly be stupid, and never have thought at all, whether it be so or not.) But this I say; There is no Man, who thinks or reasons at all, but may easily become more certain, that there is Something Eternal, Infinite, and Self-existing; than he can be certain of any Thing else.

*Of the
Idea of
God inclu-
ding Self-
Existence.*

3dly. Hence we may observe, That Our first Certainty of the Existence of God, does not arise from this, that in the Idea we frame of him in our Minds, or rather in the Definition that we make of the Word, [God,] as signifying a Being of all possible Perfections, we include Self-Existence; but from hence, that 'tis demonstrable both Negatively, that neither can All Things have arisen out of Nothing, nor can they have depended one on another in an endless Succession; and also positively, that there is Something in the Universe, actually existing without us, the Supposition of whose Not-Existing plainly implies a Contradiction. I do not here say positively, that the Argument drawn from our including Self-Existence in the Idea of God, or our comprehending it in the Definition or Notion we frame of him; is wholly inconclusive and ineffectual, to prove his actual Existence. But that it is far from being a Clear and Obvious Demonstration, fitted to convince and put the Atheist to Silence; appears from the endless Disputes maintained by Learned Men concerning it, without being able fully to understand or satisfy each other on either side of the Question.

The

Being and Attributes of God.

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The Obscurity and Defect of that Argument, seems to lie in this; that it extends only to the Nominal Idea or mere Definition of a Self-existent Being, and does not with a sufficiently evident Connexion refer and apply that Nominal Idea, Definition, or Notion which we frame in our own Mind, to the Real Idea of a Being actually existing without us. For it is not Satisfactory, that I have in my Mind an Idea of the Proposition; *There exists a Being, indued with all possible Perfections*; Or, *There is a Self-Existent Being*: But I must also have some Idea of the Thing. I must have an Idea of Something actually existing without me; and I must see wherein consists the Absolute Impossibility of removing that Idea, and consequently of supposing the Non-Existence of the Thing; before I can be satisfied from that Idea, that the thing actually exists. The bare having an Idea of the Proposition, *There is a Self-Existent Being*, proves indeed the Thing not to be impossible; (For of an impossible Proposition there is properly no Idea;) But that it actually Is, cannot be proved from the Idea; unless the Certainty of the Actual Existence of a Necessarily-existing Being, follows from the Possibility of the Existence of such a Being: Which that it does in this particular Case, many Learned Men have indeed thought; and their subtle Arguings upon this Head, are sufficient to raise a Cloud not easy to be dispelled. But it is a much Clearer and more Convincing way of Arguing, to demonstrate that there does actually exist without us a Being, whose Existence is Necessary and of it self; by showing the manifest Contradiction contained in the contrary Supposition,

pag. 12
&c.

pag. 16.

(as I have before done,) and at the same time the absolute Impossibility of destroying or removing some Ideas, as of Eternity and Immenfity, which therefore must needs be the Attributes of a Necessary Being actually Existing. For if I have in my Mind an Idea of a Thing, and cannot possibly in my Imagination take away the Idea of that Thing as actually existing, any more than I can change or take away the Idea of the Equality of twice two to four; the Certainty of the *Existence* of that Thing, is the same, and stands on the same Foundation, as the Certainty of the other *Relation*: For the Relation of Equality between twice two and four, has no other Certainty but this, that I cannot, without a Contradiction, change or take away the Idea of that Relation. We are *Certain* therefore of the Being of a Supreme Independent Cause; because 'tis strictly demonstrable, that there is Something in the Universe, actually existing without us, the Supposition of whose Not-existing plainly implies a Contradiction.

*That the
Material
World can-
not possibly
be the Self-
Existent
Being.*

pag. 15.

4thly. From hence it follows, that *The material World cannot possibly be the First and Original Being, Uncreated, Independent, and of it self self Eternal.* For since it hath been already demonstrated, that whatever Being hath Existed from Eternity, Independent, and without any External Cause of its Existence; must be Self-Existent: And that whatever is Self-Existent, must Exist Necessarily by an absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing it self: It follows evidently, that unless the Material World Exists Necessarily, by an Absolute Necessity in its own Nature, so as that it must be an Express Contradiction to suppose

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suppose it not to Exist; it cannot be Independent, and of it self Eternal. Now that the Material World does not Exist thus necessarily, is very Evident. For Absolute Necessity of Existing, and a Possibility of not-Existing, being contradictory Ideas; 'tis manifest the Material World cannot Exist Necessarily, if without a Contradiction we can Conceive it either Not to Be, or to be in any respect otherwise than it Now is. Than which, nothing is more easy. For whether we Consider the *Form* of the World, with the *Disposition* and *Motion* of its Parts; or whether we consider the *Matter* of it, as such, without respect to its present Form; every Thing in it, both the *Whole* and every one of its *Parts*, their *Situation* and *Motion*, the *Form* and also the *Matter*, are the most Arbitrary and Dependent Things, and the farthest removed from Necessity, that can possibly be imagined. A Necessity indeed of *Fitness*, that is, a Necessity that Things should be as they are, in order to the *Well-Being* of the whole, there may be in all these Things: But an absolute Necessity of *Nature* in any of them, (which is what the Atheist must maintain,) there is not the least appearance of. If any Man will say in this Sense, (as every Atheist must do,) either that the *Form* of the World, or at least the *Matter* and *Motion* of it, is necessary; Nothing can possibly be invented more Absurd.

If he says that the particular *Form* is Necessary; that is, that the World, and all ^{*This Form of the World not*} *Things* that are therein, exist by a Necessity ^{*necessary.*} of Nature; he must affirm it to be a Contradiction to suppose that any Part of the
C 4 World

World can be in any respect otherwise than it now is: It must be a Contradiction in Terms, to suppose more or fewer Stars, more or fewer Planets, or to suppose their Size, Figure or Motion, Different from what it now is; or to suppose more or fewer Plants and Animals upon Earth, or the present ones of different Shape and Bigness from what they now are: In all which things there is the greatest Arbitrariness, in respect of Power and Possibility, that can be imagined; however necessary any of them may be, in respect of Wisdom, and Preservation of the Beauty and Order of the whole.

Nor its
Motion.

If the Atheist will say, that the *Motion in General* of all Matter is necessary: it follows that it must be a Contradiction in Terms, to suppose any Matter to be at *Rest*; Which is so absurd and ridiculous, that I think hardly any Atheists, either Antient or Modern, have presumed directly to suppose it.

*Mr. Toland
Lect.
III.

One late * Author indeed has ventur'd to assert, and pretended to prove, that *Motion*, (that is, the *Conatus to Motion*, the *Tendency to move*, the *Power or Force* that produces actual Motion,) is essential to all Matter: But how Philosophically, may appear from this One Consideration. The essential *Tendency to Motion*, of every one or of any one Particle of Matter in this Author's imaginary infinite *Plenum*, must be either a *Tendency to move some one determinate way at once*, or to move every way at once: A *Tendency to move some one determinate way*, cannot be essential to any Particle of Matter, but must arise from some External Cause; because there is nothing in the pretended Necessary Nature of

of any Particle, to determine its Motion necessarily and essentially *one way* rather than *another*: And a *Tendency* or *Conatus* equally to move *every way* at once, is either an absolute Contradiction, or at least could produce nothing in Matter but an *Eternal Rest* of all and every one of its Parts. But to proceed.

If the Atheist will suppose Motion necessary and essential to *some* Matter, but not to *all*: The same Absurdity, as to the *Determination* of Motion, still follows: And now he moreover supposes an Absolute Necessity *not Universal*; that is, that it shall be a Contradiction to suppose some certain Matter at *Rest*, tho' at the same time some other Matter actually be at *Rest*.

If he only affirms bare *Matter* to be Necessary: Then, besides the extreme Folly of his attributing *Motion* and the *Form* of the World to *Chance*; (which Opinion I think all Atheists have now given up; and therefore I shall not think my self obliged to take any Notice of it in the Sequel of this Discourse;) it may be demonstrated by many Arguments drawn from the Nature and Affections of the Thing it self, that *Matter* is *not a Necessary Being*. For Instance, thus. If *Matter* be supposed to exist Necessarily; then in that Necessary Existence, there is either included the Power of *Gravitation*. or not: If not, then in a World *merely Material*, and in which *no Intelligent Being* presides, there *never could have been any Motion*; because Motion, as has been already shown, and is now granted in the Question, is not necessary *of it self*: But if the Power of *Gravitation* be included in the pretended Necessary Existence of Matter; then, it following necessarily that there must be

Nor the
bare Mat-
ter.

pag. 24.

be a *Vacuum*, (as the incomparable Sir *Isaac Newton* has abundantly demonstrated that there must, if Gravitation be an Universal Quality or Affection of Matter;) it follows likewise, that *Matter* is not a Necessary Being: For if a *Vacuum* actually be, then it is plainly more than possible for *Matter* not to be. If an Atheist will yet Assert, that *Matter* may be necessary, though not necessary to be every where: I answer; this is an express Contradiction. For absolute Necessity, is absolute Necessity every where alike: And if it be no Impossibility for *Matter* to be absent from one Place, 'tis no Impossibility (absolutely in the Nature of the Thing; For no Relative or Consequential Necessity, can have any Room in this Argument:) 'Tis no absolute Impossibility, I say, in the Nature of the Thing, that *Matter* should be absent from any other Place, or from every Place.

Spinoza's
Opinion
confuted.

Spinoza, the most celebrated Patron of Atheism in our Time, who taught that

* Una substantia non potest produci ab alia substantia. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop.*

6.

Omnis substantia est necessario infinita. *Ibid. Prop.*

8.

Ad naturam substantia pertinet existere. *Ibid. Prop.*

7.

† Præter Deum nulla dari neq; concipi potest substantia. *Ibid. Prop. 14.*

* there is no Difference of Substances, but that the Whole and every Part of the *Material World* is a Necessarily existing Being; and that † there is no other God, but the Universe: That he might seemingly avoid the manifold Absurdities of that Opinion; endeavours by an Ambiguity of Expression in the Progress of his Discourse, to elude the

Arguments by which he foresaw his Assertion would be confuted. For, having at first

first plainly asserted, that *

All Substance is Necessarily-existing; he would afterward seem to explain it away, by asserting, that the Reason why every thing

† exists necessarily and could not possibly have been in any respect different from what it now is, is because every thing flows from the *Necessity of the Divine Nature*. By which if the unwary Reader understands, that he means things are therefore Necessarily such as they are, because

Infinite Wisdom and Goodness could not possibly make Things but in that Order which is Fittest and Wisest in the Whole; he is very much mistaken: For such a Necessity, is not a Natural, but only a Moral and Consequential Necessity, and directly contrary to the Author's true Intention. Further, if the Reader hereby understands, that God was determined, not by a Necessity of Wisdom and Goodness, but by a mere Natural Necessity, exclusive of Will and Choice, to make all Things just as they now are; neither is This the whole of *Spinoza's* meaning: For this, as absurd as it is, is still supposing God as a Substance distinct from the Material World; which * He expressly * *Locis supra citatis.* denies. Nay further, if any one thinks his meaning to be, that all Substances in the World, are only Modifications of the Divine Essence; neither is This *All*: For thus God may still be supposed as an Agent, acting upon *himself* at least, and manifesting *himself* in different manners, according to his own Will:

which

* Ad naturam substantia pertinet existere. Prop. 7.

† Res nullo alio modo, neq; alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productæ sunt. Prop. 33.

Ex Necessitate Divinae Naturæ, infinita infinitis modis, (hoc est, omnia quæ sub intellectum infinitum cadere possunt) sequi debent. Prop. 16.

† Deum non operari ex
libertate voluntatis. *Prop.*
32. *Corol. 1. & Scholium ad*
Prop. 17.

* Una substantia non po-
test produci ab alia substan-
tia. *Prop. 6.*

† Res nullo alio modo neq;
alio ordine a Deo produci
potuerunt, quam productæ
sunt. *Prop. 33.*

|| Præter Deum nulla da-
ri, neq; concipi potest sub-
stantia. *Prop. 14.*

* Deum non operari ex
Libertate voluntatis. *Prop.*
32. *Coroll. 1.*

† Nullo alio modo, neq;
Ordine, &c.

which † *Spinoza* expressly de-
nies. But his true Meaning
therefore, however darkly and
ambiguously he sometimes
speaks, must be this; and if he
means any thing at all consistent with him-
self, can be no other than this: That, since
it is absolutely * impossible
for any thing to be created or
produced by another; and
† also absolutely impossible
for God to have caused any
thing to be in any respect
different from what it now

is; every thing that exists, must need be so
a || Part of the Divine Sub-
stance, not as a Modification
caused in it by any * Will or
Good-Pleasure or Wisdom in
the whole, but as of Absolute
Necessity in it self, with re-
spect to the † manner of the

Existence of each Part, no less than with re-
spect to the Self-Existence of the whole. Thus
the Opinion of *Spinoza*, when expressed plain-
ly and consistently, comes evidently to this:
That the *Material World*, and every Part of it,
with the order and manner of Being of each
Part, is the only Self-Existent, or Necess-
sarily-Existing Being. And now Consequent-
ly, he must of Necessity affirm all the Con-
clusions, which I have before shown to follow
demonstrably from that Opinion. He can-
not possibly avoid affirming, that 'tis a Con-
tradiction, (not to the *Perfections of God*; For
that's mere senseless Cant and Amusement in
Him who maintains that there is but One Sub-
stance

stance in the Universe; But he must affirm that it is *in it self and in Terms* a Contradiction,) for any thing to be, or to be imagined, in any respect otherwise than it Now is. He must say 'tis a Contradiction, to suppose the *Number, or Figure, or Order* of the Principal Parts of the World, could possibly have been different from what they Now are. He must say Motion is necessary of *it self*; and consequently that 'tis a Contradiction in Terms, to suppose any Matter to be at Rest: Or else he must affirm, (which is rather the more absurd of the two; as may appear from what has been already said in proof of the *Second* pag. 12) General Head of this Discourse: And yet he has * chosen to affirm it;)

that Motion, as a Dependent Being, has been eternally communicated from one piece of Matter to another; without having at all any Original Cause of its Being, either within it self or from without.

* Corpus motum, vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, & illud iterum ab alio, & sic in infinitum. Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.

Which, with other the like Consequences touching the Necessity of the Existence of Things; (the very mention of which, is a sufficient Confutation of any Opinion they follow from;) do, as I have said, unavoidably follow from the foremention'd Opinion of *Spinoza*: And consequently That Opinion, viz. *That the Universe or Whole World is the Self-existent or Necessarily-existing Being*, is demonstrated to be false.

I have in this Attempt to show that *The Material World cannot possibly be the First and Original Being, Uncreated, Independent, and Self-existent;*

A Demonstration of the

existent; designedly omitted the Argument usually drawn from the supposed absolute Impossibility in the Nature of the Thing it self, of the World's being Eternal, or having existed thro' an Infinite *Succession* of Time. And this I have done for the two following Reasons.

Of the O-

*pinion con-
cerning the
Eternity of
the World.*

1st. Because the Question between us and the Atheists, is not *whether the World can possibly have been eternal*; but *whether it can possibly be the Original, Independent and Self-existing Being*: Which is a very different Question. For many, who have affirmed the One, have still utterly denied the Other: And almost all the Antient Philosophers that held the Eternity of the World, in whose Authority and Reasons our Modern Atheists do so mightily Boast and Triumph; defended That their Opinion by such Arguments, as show plainly that they did by no means thereby intend to assert, that the Material World was the Original, Independent, Self-existing Being, in Opposition to the Belief of the Existence of a Supreme All-governing *Mind*, which is the Notion of God. So that the Deniers of the Being of God, have no manner of Advantage from that Opinion of the Eternity of the World, even supposing it could not be disproved. Almost all the old Philosophers, I say, who held the Eternity of the World, did not thereby mean (at least their Arguments do not tend to prove) that it was Independent and Self-Existent; but their Arguments are wholly levelled, either to prove barely that Something must needs be Eternal, and that the Universe could not possibly arise out of Nothing absolutely and without Cause; which is all that *Ocellus Lucanus's* Arguments amount to:

Or

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Or else that the World is an Eternal and Necessary Effect, flowing from the Essential and Immutable Energy of the Divine Nature; which seems to have been *Aristotle's* Opinion: Or else that the World is an Eternal Voluntary Emanation from the All-wise and Supreme Cause; which was the Opinion of many of *Plato's Followers*. None of which Opinions or Arguments, will in the least help out our Modern Atheists; who would exclude Supreme *Mind* and Intelligence out of the Universe. For however the Opinion of the Eternity of the World, is really inconsistent with the Belief of its being Created in time: yet so long as the Defenders of that Opinion, either did not think it Inconsistent with the Belief of the World's being the Effect and Work of an *Eternal, All-wise and All-Powerful Mind*; or at least could defend that Opinion by such Arguments only, as did not in the least prove the Self Existence or Independency of the World, but most of them rather quite the contrary; 'Tis with the greatest Injustice and Unreasonableness in the world, that our Modern Atheists (to whose Purpose the Eternity or Non-Eternity of the World would signify nothing, unless at the same Time the Existence and Sovereignty of Eternal Intelligence or Mind were likewise disproved,) pretend either the Authority or the Reasons of these Men to be on their side.

Ocellus Lucanus, one of the ancientest Asserters of the Eternity of the World; (whose Antiquity and Authority * Mr *Blunt* opposes to that of *Moses*;) in delivering his Opinion, speaks indeed like one

* *Oracles of Reason*;
Letter to Mr. Gildon, p.
216.

that

that believed the Material World to be Self-

† Ἀγέννητον τὸ πᾶν καὶ ἀ-
βάλεδρον.

Ἀναρχόν καὶ ἀτελευτητον.
Κόσμου αὐτὸς ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ
αἰδιδός ἐστι καὶ ἀπὸ τελευτῆς καὶ δι-
αλύσεως τὸ πάσῃ αἰῶνα.

Λεὶ οὐκ ἔστι κόσμος, ἀναγ-
καῖον καὶ τὰ μέρη αὐτοῦ συνυ-
παρχειν. Λέγω ὃ μέρος, κ-
ρανόν, γὰρ, &c. Ocel. Lucan.
Πλεὶς τὸ πᾶν παντὸς φύσεως.

existent; asserting, † that it is utterly incapable either of Generation or Corruption, of Beginning or End; that it is of it self Eternal and Perfect and Permanent for ever; and that the Frame and Parts of the World must needs be Eternal, as well as the Substance and Matter of the Whole. But when he comes

to produce his Arguments or

Reasons for his Opinion; they are either so very absurd and ridiculous, that even any

Atheist in this Age ought to be ashamed to re-

peat them; as when he proves*

* Τὸ ἀναρχόν καὶ ἀτελευ-
τητον τὸ σχήματ' καὶ τὴν κινή-
σιν, πισύται διὸν ἀγέ-
νητον ὁ κόσμος καὶ ἀφθα-
ρτον. ἢ πᾶν τὸ σχήματ'
ἰδέα, κύκλ' οὐκ ἔστι παρ-
ποδὲν ἴσον καὶ ὅμοιον, δι-
ὅπερ ἀναρχόν καὶ ἀτελευ-
τητον ἢ πᾶν τὴν κινήσιν &c.
Ibid.

Thus Translated: Nay, that the Figure, Motion, &c, thereof, are without Beginning and End; thereby it plainly appears, that the World admitteth neither Production nor dissolution: For the Figure is Spherical, and consequently on every side equal, and therefore without Beginning or Ending. Also the motion is circular, &c. Oracles of Reason, p. 215.

† Ἀγέννητον τὸ πᾶν. — ἐξ ὧν γέγονον, ἐκ αὐτοῦ πρώτον τὸ πᾶν τὸ ἐ-
στίν. — Τὸ γὰρ ὃ πᾶν γενόμενον οὐκ ἔστι παλαιόν καὶ τὸ πᾶν γὰρ ὃ
ἐκ αὐτοῦ, — Ἐκ τούτου γὰρ τὸ Παντὸς ἐστίν. Ocell. Ibid.

that the World must needs be Eternal, without Beginning or End, because both its Figure and Motion are a Circle, which has neither Beginning nor End: Or else they are such Arguments as prove only what no Man ever really denied; viz. that Something must needs be Eternal, because 'tis impossible for every Thing to arise out of Nothing, or to fall into Nothing; As when he says † that the World must have been Eternal, because 'tis a Contradiction for the Universe to have had a Beginning; since if it had a Beginning, it must have been caused

by some other thing, and then it is not the Universe. To which One Argument, all that he says in his whole Book, is plainly reducible. So that 'tis evident, all that he really proves, is only this, that there must needs be an Eternal Being in the Universe: and not, that Matter is Self-Existent, in Opposition to Intelligence and Mind. For, all that he asserts about the absolute Necessity of the Order and Parts of the World, is confessedly most ridiculous: not at all proved by the Arguments he alleges: And in some Passages of this very Book, as well as in other Fragments, He himself supposes, and is forced expressly to confess; that, however Eternal and Necessary every thing in the World be imagined to be; yet even That Necessity must flow from an
* *Eternal and Intelligent Mind,*

the Necessary Perfections of whose Nature are the Cause † of the Harmony and Beauty of the World, and particularly of Mens having || Faculties, Organs of Sense, Appetites, &c, fitted even to Final Causes.

* Τὸ αἰώνιον, διόν μὲν, καὶ λόγον ἔχον καὶ ἐμφορὴν. U-cell. Luc. de Leg. fragm.

† Συνέχει τὸν κόσμον ἀσμενία. Ταύτης δ' αἰτία ὁ Θεός. Ibid.

|| Τὰς δυνάμεις καὶ τὰ ὄργανα, καὶ τὰς ὁρεξείας ὑπὸ Θεοῦ διδομένας ἀνθρώποις, ἔχου

δυνῆς ἐνέργειαν διδομένην συνέβην, ἀλλὰ &c. Idem, Περὶ τῶν παρ' οὐρανοῦ.

Aristotle likewise, was a great Asserter indeed of the Eternity of the World: But not in Opposition to the Belief of the Being, or of the Power, Wisdom, or Goodness of God: On the contrary, He for no other Reason asserted the World to be Eternal, but because he fancied that such an Effect must needs eternally proceed from such an Eternal Cause. And so far was he from teaching, that Matter is the first and Original Cause of all Things; that on

D

the

the contrary he every where expressly describes

* Νῦν.

† Θεὸν ἀσωμάτου ἀπείρου.
Ding. in vita Aristot.

|| Τὸ πρῶτον κινεῖν, ἀκί-
νητον. Aristot. Metaph.

* Εἰ μὴ ἔσαι οὐδ' αὖτε
αἰδιοντα ἄλλα, ἐκ ἔσαι ἀρχὴ
καὶ τῆς. ἀλλ' αἰεὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ
ἀρχῆ. Ibid.

God to be an * *Intelligent Be-
ing*: † *Incorporeal*; || *The First
Mover of all Things, Himself
Immoveable*; and affirms, that
* *if there were nothing but Mat-
ter in the World, there would
be no Original Cause, but an
Infinite Progression of Causes*;

which is absurd.

As to those Philosophers, who taught
plainly and expressly, that Matter was not
only Eternal, but also *Self-existent* and intire-
ly Independent, Co-existing from Eternity
with God, Independently, as a Second Prin-
ciple: I have already shown the Impossibility
of this Opinion, at the Entrance upon the
present Head of Discourse, where I proved
that Matter could not possibly be *Self-existent*:
And I shall further demonstrate it to be False,
when I come to prove the *Unity* of the *Self-ex-
istent Being*.

Page 25.

Plato, whatever his Opinion was about the
original *Matter*, very largely and fully de-
clares his Sentiments about the *Formation* of
the World, viz. that it was composed and
framed by an Intelligent and Wise God; And
there is no One of all the Antient Philoso-
phers, who in all his Writings speaks so excel-
lently and worthily * as

* Ὁ ποιητὴς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ
καὶ τοῦ παντός.

* Ὁ γὰρ, ἔργον καὶ θεός,
καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ τὰ
ἐν αἰδῷ, καὶ ὑπὸ γῆς ἀπαν-
τα ἐργασάμενος. De Republ.
Lib. 10.

He, concerning the Nature
and Attributes of God. Yet
as to the Time of the
World's beginning to be
Formed, He seems to make
it indefinite, when he says,

† The

† *The World must needs be an Eternal Resemblance of the Eternal Idea,* At least his Followers afterward so understood and explained it, as if by the Creation of the World, was not to be understood a Creation *in Time* *; but only *in Order of Nature, Causality and Dependence*; That is; that the *Will* of God, and his Power of Acting, being necessarily as Eternal as his Essence; † the Effects of that Will and Power might be supposed coeval to the Will and Power themselves; in the same manner, as *Light* would eternally proceed from the *Sun*, or a *Shadow* from the *interposed Body*, or an *Impression* from an *imposed Seal*, if the respective Causes of these Effects were supposed Eternal.

De mundo, & de his quos in mundo deos a Deo factos scribit Plato, apertissime dicit eos esse cœpisse, & habere initium. — Verum id quomodo intelligant, invenerunt [Platonici,] non esse hoc videlicet *Temporis*, sed *Substitutionis* initium. *Ibid. Lib. 10. Cap. 31.*

Sed mundum quidem fuisse semper, Philosophia auctor est; conditore quidem Deo, sed non ex tempore *Macrobius, in Somn. Scip. Lib. 2. Cap. 10.*

† Καὶ εἰ βέλαι, παρεδείγματι αὐτοῦ τῶν γυναικῶν ξεναγήσου
πρὸς τὸ ζητέμενον· φασὶ γὰρ ὅτι καὶ αὐτὴ αἰτιον τὸ σῶμα ἡ ἐκείνη
σκιᾶ γίνεται· ὁμοῦ χειρὶ ἢ τῷ σώματι ἡ σκιὰ, καὶ ἡ ὁμοῦ ποῦ
ἔτω δὴ καὶ ὅτε ὁ κόσμος παρεκλογέθημα ὅτι τῷ Θεῷ αἰτίαι ὄντι
αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι, καὶ σωαίσιός ἐστι τῷ Θεῷ, ἔκπε δὲ καὶ ὁμοῦ ποῦ. Za-
charie Scholast. Disputat.

Sic enim, inquit [Platonici], si Pes ex æternitate semper fuisset in pulvere, semper ei subesset vestigium; quod tamen vestigium a calcante factum nemo dubitaret; nec alterum altero prius esset, quamvis alterum ab altero factum esset: Sic, inquit, & mundus atque in illo Dii creati, & semper fuerunt; semper existente qui fecit; & tamen facti sunt. *Augustin. de Civitate Dei. Lib. 10. Cap. 31.*

† Πᾶν ἀνάγει τὸνδε
χότμον, εἰς αὐτὸν ἀνα-
Plato in Timæo. Which Word.
being very imperfect in our
Copies of the Original, are
thus rendred by Cicero. Si
ergo generatus [est mundus:]
ad id effectus est, quod ra-
tione sapientiaq; compre-
henditur, atq; immutabili
æternitate continetur. Ex
quo efficitur, ut sic necesse
hunc, quem cernimus, mun-
dum, simulacrum æternum
esse alicujus æterni. Cic. de
Univers.

* Νῦν πρὸς κῶσμον εἶμι, καὶ
ὡς ῥέονα πρῶτερον αὐτῷ ὄν-
τα· ἀλλ' ὅπῃ ὁ κῶσμος παρὰ
νῦ ὅτι, φύσει πρῶτος ἐκεί-
νῳ· καὶ ἀπὸν τότε Ἰσoti-
nus.

Qui autem a Deo quidem factum fatentur, non tamen eum volunt *Temporis* habere, sed suæ *Creationis* initium; ut modo quodam vix intelligibili, Semper sit factus. *Augustin. de Civit.*

From all which, it plainly appears how little Reason our Modern Atheists have to boast either of the Authority or Reasons of those Antient Philosophers, who held the Eternity of the World. For since these Men neither proved, nor attempted to prove, that the Material World was Original to it self, Independent or Self-existing; but only that it was an Eternal Effect of an Eternal Cause, which is God; 'tis evident that this their Opinion, even supposing it could by no means be refuted, could afford no manner of Advantage to the Cause of Atheists in our days, who excluding Supreme Mind and Intelligence out of the Universe, would fain make mere Matter and Necessity the Original and Eternal Cause of all Things.

2dly, The other Reason why (in this Attempt to prove that *the Material World cannot possibly be the First and Original Being, Uncreated, Independent and Self-Existent*.) I have omitted the Argument usually drawn from the supposed absolute Impossibility of the World's being Eternal, or having existed through an Infinite Succession of Time; is *because that Argument can never be so stated, as to be of any use in Convincing or Affecting the Mind of an Atheist*, who must not be supposed to come prepared beforehand with any *transcendent Idea* of the Eternity of God. For since an Atheist cannot be supposed to Believe the Nice and Subtle (and indeed unintelligible) Distinctions of the Schools; 'tis impossible by this Argument so to disprove the Possibility of the Eternity of the World, but that an Atheist

theist will understand it to prove equally against the Possibility of any Thing's being Eternal; and consequently that it proves nothing at all, but is only a Difficulty arising from our not being able to comprehend adequately the Notion of Eternity. That the Material World is not Self-Existent or Necessarily-Existing, but the Product of some distinct superior Agent, may (as I have already shown) be strictly demonstrated by bare Reason against the most obstinate Atheist in the World: But the *Time when* the World was Created; or whether its Creation was, properly speaking, *in Time*; is not so easy to demonstrate strictly by bare Reason, (as appears from the Opinions of many of the Ancient Philosophers concerning that matter,) but the Proof of it can be taken only from Revelation. To endeavour to prove, that there cannot possibly be any such thing as *infinite Time* or *Space*, from the Impossibility of an * Addition of Finite Parts ever composing or exhausting an Infinite: or from the imaginary *inequality of the Number* of Years, Days, and Hours, that would be contained in the one; or of the Miles, Yards, and Feet, that would be contained in the other: is supposing Infinites to be made up of *Numbers* of Finites; that is, 'tis supposing Finite Quantities to be *Aliquot* or *Constituent* Parts of Infinite; when indeed they are not so, but do all *Equally*, whether *Great* or *Small*, whether *Many* or *Few*, bear the very same proportion to an Infinite, as Mathematical Points do to a Line, or Lines do to a Superficies, or as Moments do to Time; that is, None at all. So that to argue absolutely against the Possibility

Pag. 22.

* Cudworth Sy- stem. p.

643.

bility of *Infinite* Space or Time, merely from the imaginary inequality of the *Numbers* of their *Finite* Parts; which are not properly Constituent Parts, but mere Nothings in Proportion; is the very same thing as it would be to argue again st the Possibility of the Existence of any determinate *Finite* Quantity, from the imaginary Equality or Inequality of the *Number* of the Mathematical Lines and Points contained therein; when indeed neither the one nor the other have (in propriety of Speech) any *Number* at all, but they are absolutely *without Number*: Neither can any given Number or Quantity be any *Aliquot* or *Constituent* Part of *Infinite*, or be compared at all with it, or bear any kind of Proportion to it, or be the Foundation of any Argument in any Question concerning it.

The Es-
sence of the
Self-ex-
istent Be-
ing, Incom-
prehensible.

pag. 14,
15, 16.

pag. 22.

IV. *What the Substance or Essence of that Being, which is Self-Existent, or Necessarily-Existing, is; we have no Idea, neither is it at all possible for us to comprehend it.* That there is such a Being, actually Existing without us, we are sure (as I have already shown) by strict and undeniable Demonstration. Also what it is not; that is, that the Material World is not it, as our Modern Atheists would have it; has been already Demonstrated. But what it is, I mean as to its Substance and Essence; this we are Infinitely unable to comprehend. Yet does not this in the least diminish the Certainty of the Demonstration of its Existence. For it is one Thing, to know certainly that a Being Exists; and another, to know what the Essence of that Being is: And the one may be capable of the strictest Demonstration,

tion, when the other is absolutely beyond the Reach of all our Faculties to understand. A Blind or Deaf Man has infinitely more Reason to deny the Being, or the Possibility of the Being, of Light or Sounds; than any Atheist can have to deny, or doubt of, the Existence of God. For the One can at the utmost have no other Proof, but credible Testimony, of the Existence of certain Things, whereof it is absolutely impossible that he himself should frame any manner of Idea, not only of their Essence, but even of their Effects or Properties: But the Other may with the least use of his Reason, be assured of the Existence of a Supreme Being, by undeniable Demonstration; and may also certainly know abundance of its Attributes, (as shall be made appear in the following Propositions,) though its Substance or Essence be intirely incomprehensible. Wherefore nothing can be more Unreasonable and Weak, than for an Atheist upon this account to deny the Being of God, merely because his weak and finite Understanding cannot frame to it self any adequate Notion of the Substance or Essence of that First and Supreme Cause. We are utterly ignorant of the Substance or Essence of all other things; even of those things which we converse most familiarly with, and think we understand best. There is not so mean and contemptible a Plant or Animal, that does not confound the most enlarged Understanding upon Earth: Nay even the simplest and plainest of all inanimate Beings, have their Essence or Substance hidden from Us in the deepest and most impenetrable

trable Obscurity. How weak then and foolish is it to raise Objections against the Being of God, from the Incomprehensibleness of his Essence! and to represent it as a strange and incredible thing, that there should Exist any Incorporeal Substance, the Essence of which we are not able to Comprehend! As if it were not far more strange, that there should exist numberless Objects of our Senses, Things subject to our daily Inquiry, Search and Examination; and yet we not be able, no not in any measure, to find out the real Essence of any one even of the least of *these* Things.

From what has been said upon this Head, we may observe,

*Of Infinite
Space.*

1st. The Weakness of Such, as have presumed to imagin Infinite Space to be a just Representation or adequate Idea of the Essence of the Supreme Cause. This is a weak Imagination, arising from hence, that Men using themselves to Judge of all Things by their Senses only, fancy Spiritual or Immaterial Substances, because they are not Objects of their Corporeal Senses, to be, as it were, mere Nothings, Just as Children imagin Air, because they cannot see it, to be mere Emptiness and Nothing. But the Fallacy is too gross, to deserve being Insisted upon. There are perhaps Numberless Substances in the World, whose Essences are as intirely unknown and impossible to be represented to our Imaginations, as Colours are to a Man that was Born Blind, or Sounds to One that has been always Deaf: Nay, there is no Substance in the World, of which we know any thing further, than only
a certain

Being and Attributes of God.

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a certain Number of its Properties or Attributes; of which we know fewer in some things, and in Others more. Infinite Space, is nothing else but an abstract Idea of Immenfity or Infinity; even as Infinite Duration, is of Eternity: And it would be just as proper, to say that Eternity is the Effence of the Supreme Cause; as to say, that Immenfity is so. Indeed they seem Both to be but Attributes of an Effence or Substance Incomprehensible to Us; and when we endeavour to represent the real Substance of any Being whatsoever in our weak Imaginations, we shall find our selves in like manner deceived.

2dly. From hence appears, the *Vanity of the Schoolmen*; who, as in other Matters, so in their Disputes about the Self-Existent Being; when they come at what they are by no means able to comprehend or explain, least they should seem ignorant of any thing, they give us Terms of Art, and Words of Amusement; mere empty Sounds, which under pretense of explaining the Matter before them, have really no manner of Idea or Signification at all. Thus when they tell us concerning the Effence of God, that He is *Purus Actus, mera forma*, and the like; either the Words have no meaning, and signifie nothing; or else they expers only the Perfection of his Power, and other Attributes; which is not what these Men intend to expers by them.

V. Though the Substance or Effence of the Self-Existent Being, is it self absolutely Incomprehensible to us; yet many of the Essential Attributes of his Nature are strictly Demonstrable, as well as his Existence. Thus, in the first place, the Self-Existent

Being and Attributes of God.

Existent Being must of necessity be Eternal. The Idea's of Eternity and Self-Existence are so closely connected, that because Something must of Necessity be Eternal *Independently and without any outward Cause of its Being*, therefore it must necessarily be Self-existent; and because it is impossible but Something must be Self-existent; therefore it is necessary that it must likewise be Eternal. To be Self-existent, is (as has been already shown) to Exist by an Absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing it self. Now this Necessity being Absolute, and not depending upon any thing External, must be always unalterably the same; Nothing being alterable, but what is capable of being affected by something without it self. That Being therefore, which has no other Cause of its Existence, but the absolute Necessity of its own Nature; must of Necessity have existed from everlasting, without Beginning; and must of Necessity exist to everlasting, without End.

*Of the
Manner of
our Conceiving the
Eternity of
God.*

As to the *Manner* of this Eternal Existence, 'tis manifest it herein infinitely transcends the Manner of the Existence of all Created Beings, even of such as shall exist for ever; that whereas it is not possible for their finite Minds to comprehend all that is past, or to understand perfectly all things that are at present, much less to know all that is future, or to have entirely in their Power any thing that is to come; but their Thoughts, and Knowledge, and Power, must of Necessity have degrees and periods, and be successive and transient as the Things Themselves: The Eternal, Supreme Cause, on the contrary, (supposing him to be an *Intelligent Being*, which will hereafter be

be proved in the Sequel of this Discourse,) must of Necessity have such a perfect, independent and unchangeable Comprehension of all things, that there can be no One Point or Instant of his Eternal Duration, wherein all Things that are past, present, or to come, will not be as entirely known and represented to him in one single Thought or View; and all things present and future, be equally intirely in his Power and Direction; as if there was really no Succession at all, but all things were actually present at once. Thus far we can speak Intelligibly concerning the Eternal Duration of the Self-Existent Being; and no *Atheist* can say that this is an Impossible, Absurd or Insufficient Account; It is, in the most proper and intelligible Sense of the Words, to all the purposes of Excellency and Perfection. *Interminabilis vitæ tota simul & perfecta Possessio*: The entire and perfect Possession of an endless Life.

Others have supposed that the Difference ^{With respect to} between the Manner of the Eternal Existence ^{Succession.} of the Supreme Cause, and that of the Existence of Created Beings, is this: That whereas the latter is a continual transient Succession of Duration; the former is one Point or Instant comprehending Eternity, and wherein all things are really co-existent. But this Distinction I shall not now insist upon; as being of no use in the present Dispute; because it is impossible to prove and explain it in such a manner, as ever to convince an *Atheist* that there is any thing in it. And besides; as on the one hand, the School-men have indeed generally chosen to defend it; so on the other hand,

* *Crucem ingenio figere ut rem capiat fugientem Caprum.* — Tam fieri non potest, ut instans [*Temporis*] coexistat rei successiva, quam impossibile est punctum coexistere, [*coextendi*] lineæ. —

— *Lusus merus non intellectuum verborum, Gassend. Physic. lib. 1.*

I shall not trouble you with the inconsistent and unintelligible Notions of the Schoolmen; that it [*the Eternity of God*] is *duratio tota simul*, in which we are not to conceive any Succession, but to imagin it in an Instant. We may as well conceive the *Immensity* of God to be a *Point*, as his *Eternity* to be an *Instant*. — And how that can be together, which must necessarily be imagined to be co-existent to Successions; let them that can, conceive. *Archbishop Tillotson, Vol. 7. Sermon. 13.*

Others say, God sees and knows future things, by the presentality and co-existence of all things in Eternity; for they say that future things are actually present and existing to God, though not in *mensura propria*, yet in *mensura aliena*. The School-men have much more of this Jargon and canting Language; I envy no Man the understanding these Phrases; but to me they seem to signifie nothing, but to have been Words invented by idle and conceited Men; which a great many ever since, lest they should seem to be ignorant, would seem to understand: But I wonder most, that Men, when they have amused and puzzled themselves and others with hard Words, should call this *Explaining Things*. *Archbishop Tillotson, Vol. 6. Sermon. 6.*

That the Self-Existent Being must be Infinite and Omnipresent.

VI. The Self-Existent Being, must of Necessity be Infinite and Omnipresent. The Idea of Infinity or Immensity, as well as of Eternity, is so closely connected with that of Self-Existence, that because it is impossible but Something must be Infinite *independently and of it self*, (for else it would be impossible there should be any Infinite at all, unless an Effect could be perfecter than its Cause;) therefore it must of Necessity be Self-Existent: and because Something must of Necessity be Self-Existent, therefore it is necessary that it must likewise be Infinite. To be Self-Existent (as has been already shown,) is to Exist by an Absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing

Being and Attributes of God.

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it self: Now this Necessity being Absolute in it self, and not depending on any Outward Cause; 'tis evident it must be *every where*, as well as *always*, unalterably the same: For a Necessity which is not every where the same, is plainly a Consequential Necessity only, depending upon some External Cause, and not an Absolute one in its own Nature: For a Necessity absolutely such in it self, has no Relation to Time or Place, or any thing else. Whatever therefore Exists by an Absolute Necessity in its own Nature, must needs be Infinite as well as Eternal. To suppose a Finite Being, to be Self-Existent; is to say that it is a Contradiction for That Being not to Exist, the Absence of which may yet be conceived without a Contradiction: Which is the greatest Absurdity in the World: For if a Being can without a Contradiction be absent from One Place, it may without a Contradiction be absent likewise from another Place, and from all Places: And whatever Necessity it may have of Existing, must arise from some External Cause, and not absolutely from it self; and consequently, the Being cannot be Self-Existent.

From hence it follows,

1st. That the Infinity of the Self-Existent Being, must be an Infinity of *Fulness* as well as of *Immensity*; that is, it must not only be without *Limits*, but also without *Diversity*, *Defect*, or *Interruption*. For Instance: Could *Matter* be supposed *Boundless*, it would not therefore follow that it was in this compleat Sense *Infinite*; because though it had no Limits, yet it might have within it self any assignable Vacuities. But now whatever is Self-

Self-Existent, must of Necessity Exist absolutely in every Place alike, and be equally present every where; and consequently must have a true and absolute Infinity, both of *Immensity* and *Fulness*.

2dly. From hence it follows, that the Self-Existent Being, must be a *most Simple, Unchangeable, Incorruptible Being, without Parts, Figure, Motion, Divisibility*, or any other such Properties as we find in Matter. For all these things do plainly and necessarily imply Finiteness in their very Notion, and are utterly inconsistent with complete Infinity. *Divisibility* is a separation of Parts, real or mental: Meaning by mental Separation, not barely a *partial Apprehending*; (for *Space*, for instance,

* *Ordo partium Spatii est immutabilis: Moveantur hæc de locis suis, & movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis. Newton Princip. Schol. ad Definit. 8.*

which is absolutely indivisible and inseparable either really or * mentally, may yet be *partially apprehended*;) but a removing, disjoining, or separating of Parts one from another even so much as in the Imagination: And any such Separation or Removing of Parts one from another, is *really* or *mentally* a setting of Bounds; Either of which, destroys Infinity. *Motion*, for the same reason, implies Finiteness: And *to have Parts*, properly speaking, signifies either Difference and Diversity of Existence, which is inconsistent with Necessity: or else it signifies Divisibility, real or mental as before, which is inconsistent with complete Infinity. *Corruption, Change, or any Alteration whatsoever*, implies Motion, Separation of Parts, and Finiteness. And any Manner of *Composition*, in opposition to the most perfect *Simplicity*, signifies

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signifies Difference and Diversity in the manner of Existence; which is inconsistent with Necessity.

'Tis evident therefore, that the Self-Existent Being must be Infinite in the *strictest* and most complete Sense. But now as to the particular Manner of his being Infinite or every where present, in opposition to the manner of Created Things being present in such or such finite places; This it is as impossible for our finite Understandings to comprehend or explain; as it is for us to form an adequate Idea of Infinity. Yet that the thing is true, that he is actually Omnipresent, we are as certain, as we are that there must Something be Infinite; which no Man who has thought upon these things at all, ever denied. The Schoolmen indeed have presumed to assert, that the Immensity of God is a *Point*, as his Eternity is an *Instant*. But this being altogether Unintelligible; That which we can more safely affirm, and which no Atheist can say is absurd, and which nevertheless is sufficient to all wise and good Purposes, is this: That whereas all Finite and Created Beings, can be present but in One definite place at Once; and Corporeal Beings even in That One Place very imperfectly and unequally, to any Purpose of Power or Activity, only by the Successive Motion of different Members and Organs; The Supreme Cause on the contrary, being an Infinite and most Simple Essence, and comprehending all things perfectly in himself, is *at all times equally* present, both in his Simple Essence, and by the Immediate and Perfect Exercise of all his Attributes, to every Point of the Boundless Immensity,

Immensity, 'as if it were really all but one Single Point.

That the
Self-ex-
istent Being
can be but
One.

VII. *The Self-Existent Being, must of Necessity be but One.* This evidently follows from his being *Necessarily-Existent*. For Necessity Absolute in it self, is Simple and Uniform, without any possible Difference or Variety: And all Variety or Difference of Existence, must needs arise from some External Cause, and be dependent upon it. For to suppose two (or more) different Natures existing of themselves, necessarily, and independent from each other; implies this plain Contradiction; that each of them being independent from the other, they may either of them be supposed to exist alone, so that it will be no contradiction to imagine the other not to exist; and consequently neither of them will be Necessarily Existing. Whatsoever therefore Exists necessarily, is the One Simple Essence of the Self-Existent Being; and whatsoever differs from that, is not Necessarily-Existing: Because in absolute Necessity there can be no Difference or Diversity of Existence. Other Beings there may be innumerable, besides the One Infinite Self-Existent: But no Other Being can be Self-Existent, because so it would be individually the same, at the same time that it is supposed to be different.

From hence it follows,

Of the Tri-
nity.

1st. That the *Unity* of God, is a true and real, not figurative, Unity. With which Prime Foundation of *Natural Religion*, how the *Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity* perfectly agrees, I have elsewhere indeavoured to show particularly, in its proper place.

2dly.

2dly. From hence it follows, That it is impossible there should be two different Self-existent Independent Principles, as some Philosophers have imagined; such as God and Matter. For since Self-Existence is Necessary-Existence, and since it is an express Contradiction (as has already been shown) that two different Natures should each be Necessarily-existing; it evidently follows, that 'tis absolutely impossible there should be Two Independent Self-existent Principles, such as God and Matter.

The Impossibility of two Independent Principles. Pag. 48.

3dly. From hence we may observe the Vanity, Folly and Weakness of Spinoza: who, because the Self-existent Being must necessarily be but One, concludes from thence, that the whole World, and every thing contained therein, is One Uniform Substance, Eternal, Uncreated and Necessary: Whereas just on the contrary he ought to have concluded, that because all things in the World are very different one from another, and have all manner of Variety, and all the Marks of Will and Arbitrariness and Changeableness, (and none of Necessity) in them; being plainly fitted with very different Powers, to very different Ends; and distinguished one from another by a diversity, not only of Modes, but also of essential Attributes, and consequently (so far as 'tis possible for us, by the use of our present Faculties, to attain any Knowledge at all of them,) of their Substances themselves also; therefore none of these things are necessary or Self-existent, but must needs depend all upon some External Cause, that is, on the One Supreme, Unchangeable, Self-existent Being.

Una substantia non potest produci ab alia. Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 6. Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere. Prop. 7. Præter Deum nulla datur, neq; concipi potest substantia. Prop. 14.

E

That

That which led Spinoza into his foolish and destructive Opinion, and on which alone all his *Argumentation* is entirely built, is that absurd Definition of Substance;

† Per substantiam intelligo id, quod in se est, & per se concipitur; hoc est, id cuius conceptus non indiget conceptu alterius rei, a quo formari debeat. *Definitio 3.* Which presently after, he thus explains: Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet Existere; hoc est, ipsius essentia involvit necessario existentiam. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 7.*

† that it is *Something, the Idea of which does not depend on, or pre-suppose, the Idea of any other thing, from which it might proceed; but includes in itself Necessary-existence.* Which Definition is either false and signifies nothing; and then his whole Doctrine built upon it, falls at once to the Ground:

pag. 25 &
45.

Or, if it be true; then neither Matter, nor Spirit, nor any *Finite Being* whatsoever, (as has been before shown,) is in that Sense properly a *Substance*, but (the *idea*) the Self-existent Being alone: And so it will prove nothing (notwithstanding all his *Show* and *Form* of Demonstration,) to his main Purpose, which was to make us believe that there is no such Thing as *Power* or *Liberty* in the Universe,

* Res nullo a iō modo, neq; alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productæ sunt. *Prop. 33.*

but that * every particular thing in the World is by an Absolute Necessity just what it is, and could not possibly have been in any respect otherwise.

Supposing, I say, his Definition of Substance to be true; yet even That would really conclude nothing to his main Purpose concerning the Necessity of all Things: For since, according to that Definition, neither Matter nor Spirit, nor any Finite Beings whatsoever, are Substances, but only Modes; how will it follow, that because Substance is Self-existent, therefore all these Modes are so too?

Why,

Why, because † *from an Infinite Cause, Infinite Effects must needs follow.* Very true; supposing That Infinite Self-existent Cause, not to be a *Voluntary*, but a mere *Necessary Agent*, that is, no Agent at all:

† Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ infinita infinitis modis (hoc est, omnia quæ sub intellectum infinitum cadere possunt,) sequi debent. Prop. 16.

Which Supposition (*in the present Argument*) is the Question begged; And what he afterwards attempts to allege in proof of it, shall afterwards be considered in its proper place.

VIII. *The Self-existent and Original Cause of* *That the all things, must be an Intelligent Being.* In this Proposition lies the main Question between us and the Atheists. For that Something must be Self-existent; and that That which is Self-existent, must necessarily be Eternal and Infinite and the Original Cause of all things; will not bear much Dispute. But all Atheists, whether they hold the World to be of it self Eternal both as to the Matter and Form, or whether they hold the Matter only to be Necessary and the Form Contingent, or whatever Hypothesis they frame; have always asserted and must maintain, either directly or indirectly, that the Self-Existent Being is not an Intelligent Being, but either pure unactive Matter, or (which in other Words is the very same thing) a mere necessary Agent. For a mere Necessary Agent must of necessity either be plainly and directly in the grossest Sense Unintelligent; which was the antient Atheists Notion of the Self-existent Being: Or else its Intelligence (which is the Assertion of *Spinoza* and some Moderns,) must be wholly separate from any Power of Will and Choice;

A Demonstration of the

Choice; Which, in Respect of any Excellency and Perfection, or indeed to any common Sense, is the very same thing as no Intelligence at all.

Now that the Self-existent Being is not such a Blind and Unintelligent Necessity, but in the most proper Sense an Understanding and really active Being; cannot indeed be demonstrated strictly and properly *a priori*; because (through the Imperfection of our Faculties) we know not wherein Intelligence consists, nor can see the Immediate and Necessary Connexion of it with Self-existence, as we can that of Eternity, Infinity, Unity, &c. But *a posteriori*, almost every thing in the World demonstrates to us this great Truth, and affords undeniable Arguments to prove that the World, and all things therein, are the Effects of an Intelligent and Knowing Cause.

Proved
from the
Degrees of
Perfection
in Things,
and the Order
of
Causes and
Effects.

And 1st, Since in general there are manifestly in Things, various kinds of Powers, and very different Excellencies and Degrees of Perfection; it must needs be, that in the Order of Causes and Effects, the Cause must always be more Excellent than the Effect; and consequently the Self-existent Being, whatever That be supposed to be, must of necessity (being the Original of all things) contain in it self the Sum and highest Degree of all the Perfections of all things. Not because that which is Self-existent, must *therefore* have all possible Perfections: (For This, though most certainly true in it self, yet cannot be so clearly demonstrated *a priori*;) But because it is impossible that any Effect should have any Perfection, which was not in the Cause;

For

Being and Attributes of God.

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For if it had, then that Perfection would be caused by Nothing; which is a plain Contradiction. Now an *Unintelligent* Being, 'tis evident, cannot be endued with all the Perfections of all things in the World; because *Intelligence* is one of those Perfections. All things therefore cannot arise from an Unintelligent Original: and consequently the Self-existent Being, must of Necessity be Intelligent.

There is no Possibility for an Atheist to avoid the Force of this Argument any other way, than by asserting one of these two things: Either that there is no Intelligent Being at all in the Universe; or that Intelligence is no distinct Perfection, but merely a Composition of Figure and Motion, as Colour and Sounds are vulgarly supposed to be. Of the former of these Suppositions, every Man's own Consciousness is an abundant Confutation. For they who contend that Beasts are mere Machines, have yet never presumed to conjecture that *Men* are so too. And that the latter, (in which the main strength of Atheism lies,) is most absurd and impossible, shall be shown immediately: Which nevertheless if it could be supposed to be True, yet even in That Supposition it would still unavoidably follow, that the Self-existing Being must needs be Intelligent; as shall be proved in my 4th Argument upon this present Head. In the mean time, that it is most absurd and impossible to suppose Intelligence not to be any distinct Perfection, properly speaking, but merely a Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion; will appear from what shall be said in the ensuing Argument.

From the
Intelli-
gence that
is in crea-
ted Beings

pag. 12
C.c.

2dly. Since in *Man* in particular there is undeniably that Power, which we call Thought, Intelligence, Consciousness, Perception or Knowledge; there must of Necessity either have been from Eternity *without any Original Cause at all*, an infinite Succession of Men, whereof *no one* has had a *Necessary*, but every one a *Dependent and Communicated Being*; or else these Beings, indued with Perception and Consciousness, must at some time or other have arisen purely out of that which had no such Quality as Sense, Perception or Consciousness; or else they must have been produced by some *Intelligent Superiour Being*. There never was nor can be any Atheist whatsoever, that can deny but One of these Three Suppositions must be the Truth. If therefore the *two former* can be proved to be false and impossible, the *latter* must be own'd to be demonstrably true. Now that the *first* is impossible, is evident from what has been already said in proof of the *Second General Head* of this Discourse. And that the *second* is likewise impossible; may be thus demonstrated. If Perception or Intelligence, be a *distinct Quality* or Perfection; and not a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion; then Beings endued with Perception and Consciousness, can never have arisen purely out of that which had no such Quality as Perception or Consciousness; because Nothing can ever give to another any Perfection, which it hath not either actually in it self, or at least in a higher degree: *But* Perception or Intelligence, is a *distinct Quality* or Perfection; and not a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion.

First

First, If Perception or Intelligence, be any real, distinct Quality or Perfection; and not a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion; then Beings endued with Perception or Consciousness, can never possibly have arisen purely out of that which it self had no such Quality as Perception or Consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any Perfection, which it hath not either actually in it self, or at least in a higher degree. This is very evident; because if any Thing could give another any Perfection * Oracles which it has not it self, That Perfection would of Reason, be caused absolutely by Nothing; which is a pag. 186. plain Contradiction. If any one here replies, my Letter (as Mr. Gildon has done * in a Letter to to MrDod. Mr. Blount,) that Colours, Sounds, Taste, and wel, with the like, arise from Figure and Motion, which several An- have no such Qualities in themselves; or Replies, that Figure, Divisibility, and other Qualities of concerning Matter, are confessed to be given from God, the natural who yet cannot without extreme Blasphemy Immortality of the be said to have any such Qualities himself; Soul.

and that therefore in like manner Perception or * Intelligence may arise out of that which has no Intelligence it self: The Answer is very easie: first, that Colours, Sounds, Tasts, and the like, are by no means Effects arising from mere Figure and Motion; there being nothing in the Bodies themselves, the Objects of the Senses, that has any Manner of Similitude to any of these Qualities; but they are plainly Thoughts or Modifications of the Mind it self, which

* If with one of Cicero's Dialogists they would infer that the whole must have Understanding, because some Portions of it are Intelligent; — we may retort with the other Speaker in Cicero, that by the same Argument, the Whole must be a Courtier, a Musician, a Dancing-Master, or a Philosopher, because many of the Parts are such. Mr. Toland's Letter, Motion essential to Matter.

is an Intelligent Being; and are not properly *Caused*, but only *Occasioned*, by the Impressions of Figure and Motion. Nor will it at all help an Atheist (as to the present Question,) though we should make for his sake (that we may allow him the greatest possible Advantage) even that most absurd Supposition, that the Mind it self is nothing but mere Matter, and not at all an Immaterial Substance; For even supposing it to be mere Matter, yet he must needs confess it to be such Matter, as is indued not only with bare Figure and Motion, but also with the Quality of Intelligence and Perception; and then, as to the present Question, it will still come to the same thing; that Colours, Sounds, and the like, which are not Qualities of Unintelligent Bodies, but Perceptions of Mind, can no more be caused by, or arise from, mere Unintelligent Figure and Motion, than Colour can be a Triangle, or Sound a Square, or Something be caused by Nothing. And then, as to the *second* Part of the Objection; that *Figure, Divisibility*, and other Qualities of Matter, are (as we our selves acknowledge) given it by God, who yet cannot without extreme Blasphemy be said to have any such Qualities himself; and that therefore in like manner *Perception* or *Intelligence* may arise out of that which has no Intelligence it self: The Answer is still easier; That *Figure, Divisibility*, and other such like Qualities of Matter, are not real, proper, distinct and *Positive* Powers, but only *Negative* Qualities, Deficiencies or Imperfections; And though no Cause can communicate to its Effect any real Perfections which it has not

not it self, yet the Effect may easily have many Imperfections, Deficiencies, or Negative Qualities, which are not in the Cause. Though therefore Figure, Divisibility and the like, (which are mere Negations, as all Limitations are,) may be in the Effect, and not in the Cause; yet Intelligence, (which we now suppose, and shall prove immediately, to be a distinct Quality; and which no Man can say is a mere Negation;) cannot possibly be so.

And now, having thus demonstrated, that if Perception or Intelligence be supposed to be a *distinct Quality or Perfection*, (though even but of *Matter* only, if the Atheist pleases,) and not a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion; then Beings indued with Perception or Consciousness can never have risen purely out of that which had no such Quality as Perception or Consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any Perfection, which it has not it self: It will easily appear, *Secondly*, That *Perception or Intelligence is really such a distinct Quality or Perfection, and not possibly a mere Effect or Composition of Unintelligent Figure and Motion*: And That for this plain Reason; because Intelligence is not Figure, and Consciousness is not Motion. For whatever can arise from, or be compounded of any Things; is still only those very Things, of which it was compounded: And if infinite Compositions or Divisions be made eternally; the Things will still be but eternally the same: And all their possible Effects, can never be any thing but Repetitions of the same. For instance: All possible Changes, Compositions or Divisions
of

of *Figure*, are still nothing but *Figure*: And all possible Compositions or Effects of *Motion*, can eternally be nothing but mere *Motion*. If therefore there ever was a Time when there was nothing in the Universe but Matter and Motion; there never could have been any thing else therein, but Matter and Motion: And it would have been as impossible, there should ever have existed any such thing as Intelligence or Consciousness; or even any such thing as Light, or Heat, or Sound, or Colour; or any of those we call Secondary Qualities of Matter; as it is now impossible for Motion to be Blue or Red, or for a Triangle to be transform'd into a Sound. That which has been apt to deceive Men in this matter, is this; that they imagine Compounds, to be somewhat really different from that of which they are compounded: Which is a very great Mistake. For all the Things, of which Men so judge; either, if they be really different, are not Compounds nor Effects of what Men judge them to be, but are something totally distinct; as when the Vulgar thinks Colours and Sounds to be Properties inherent in Bodies, when indeed they are purely Thoughts of the Mind: Or else, if they be really Compounds and Effects, then they are not different, but exactly the same that ever they were; as when two Triangles put together make a Square, That Square is still nothing but two Triangles; or when a Square cut in halves makes two Triangles, those two Triangles are still only the two halves of a Square; or when the mixture of Blue and Yellow Powder makes a Green, That Green is still nothing but Blue and Yellow inter-

intermixed, as is plainly visible by the help of Microscopes: And, in short, every thing by Composition, Division, or Motion, is nothing else but the very same it was before, taken either in whole or by Parts, or in different Place or Order. Mr *Hobbs* seems to have been aware of this: And therefore, though he is very sparing, and as it were ashamed to speak out; yet finding himself pressed in his own Mind with the Difficulty arising from the Impossibility of Sense or Consciousness being merely the Effect of Figure and Motion; and it not serving his Purpose at all, (were the thing never so possible,) to suppose that God by an immediate and voluntary Act of his Almighty Power induces certain Systems of Matter with Consciousness and Thought, (of which Opinion I shall have occasion to speak something more hereafter,) he is forced* to recur to that prodigiously absurd Supposition, that all Matter, as Matter, is endued not only with Figure and a Capacity of Motion, but also with an actual Sense or Perception; and wants only the Organs and Memory of Animals, to express its Sensation.

nisi ad retinendum motum impressum, etiam remoto objecto, apta habeant Organa, ut habent Animalia; ita tantum sentient, ut nunquam sensisse se recordentur. — Sensioni ergo, quæ vulgo ita appellatur, necessario adhzret memoria aliqua, &c. *Hobbs Physic. Cap. 25. Sect. 5.*

3dly, That the Self-existent and Original Cause of all things, is an Intelligent Being; appears abundantly from the excellent

See my Letter to Mr Dodwell, with the Four Discourses of it:

* Scio fuisse Philosophos quosdam, eisdemque viros doctos, qui corpora omnia Sensu prædita esse sustinuerunt: nec video, si natura sensationis in reactione sola collocaretur, quomodo refutari possent. Sed et si ex reactione etiam corporum aliorum, phantasma aliquod nasceretur; illud tamen remoto objecto statim cessaret: Nam

From the Beauty, Order, and variety, of thing.

See Mr.
Boyle of fi-
nal Causes,
and Mr
Ray of the
Wisdom of
God in the
Creation,
and Mr
Derham's
Physico-
Theology.

riety, Order, Beauty and Wonderful Contrivance and Fitness of all things in the World, to their proper and respective Ends. This Argument has been so Learnedly and Fully handled both by Ancient and Modern Writers; that I do but just mention it, without enlarging at all upon it. I shall only at this Time make this One Observation; That whereas *Descartes* and others have endeavoured to give a Possible Account, (Possible, did I say? nay, indeed, a most impossible and ridiculous Account,) how the *World* might be formed by the Necessary Laws of Motion alone; they have by so seemingly vast an Undertaking, really meant no more, than to explain philosophically how the *inanimate* part, that is, infinitely the least considerable part of the World, might possibly have been framed. For as to *Plants* and *Animals*, in which the Wisdom of the Creator principally appears; they have never in any tolerable manner, or with any the least appearance of Success, pretended to give an account, how *They* were originally Formed. In these Things, Matter and the Laws of Motion, are able to do nothing at all: And how ridiculous the Epicurean Hypothesis is, of the Earth producing them all at first by chance; (besides that, I think, it is now given up even by all Atheists;) appears from the late Discovery made in Philosophy, that there is no such thing as equivocal Generation of any the meanest Animal or Plant; the Sun and Earth and Water, and all the Powers of Nature in Conjunction, being able to do nothing at all towards the producing any thing indued with so much as even a Vegetable Life: (From which most excellent Discovery,

very, we may *by the* observe the Usefulness of Natural and experimental Philosophy, sometimes even in Matters of Religion.) Since therefore things are thus, it must unavoidably be granted (even by the most obstinate Atheist,) either that all Plants and Animals are originally the Work of an Intelligent Being, and Created by him in Time; or that having been from Eternity in the same Order and Method they now are in, they are an Eternal Effect of an Eternal Intelligent Cause continually exerting his infinite Power and Wisdom; or else that without any Self-existent Original at all, they have been derived one from another in an Eternal Succession, by an Infinite Progress of Dependent Causes. The *first* of these three ways, is the Conclusion we assert: The *second*, (so far as the Cause of Atheism is concerned,) comes to the very same thing: And the *third* I have already shown, (in the Proof of the Second General Head of *pag. 12* this Discourse,) to be absolutely Impossible &c. and a Contradiction.

4thly, Supposing it was possible that the *From the* Form of the World, and all the Visible things *Original of* contained therein, with the Order, Beauty *Motion.* and exquisite Fitness of their Parts; nay, supposing that even Intelligence it self, with Consciousness and Thought, in all the Beings we know, could possibly be the Result or Effect of mere Unintelligent Matter, Figure and Motion; (which is the most unreasonable and impossible Supposition in the World:) Yet even still there would remain an undeniable Demonstration, that the Self-existent Being, (whatever it be supposed to be,) must be

be Intelligent. For even these Principles themselves [*Unintelligent Figure and Motion*] could never have possibly existed, without there had been before them an Intelligent Cause. I instance in *Motion*. 'Tis evident there is Now such a thing as Motion in the World: Which either began at some Time or other, or was Eternal: If it began at any Time, then the Question is granted, that the First Cause is an Intelligent Being; For mere Unintelligent Matter, and that at Rest, 'tis manifest could never of it self begin to move: On the contrary, if Motion was Eternal; either it was eternally caused by some Eternal Intelligent Being; or it must of it self be Necessary and Self-Existent; or else without any Necessity in its own Nature, and without any External Necessary Cause, it must have existed from Eternity by an Endless Successive Communication. If Motion was eternally Caused by some Eternal Intelligent Being; this also is granting the Question, as to the present Dispute. If it was of it self Necessary and Self-existent; then it follows, that it must be a Contradiction in Terms to suppose any Matter to be at Rest; And yet at the same time, because the * *Determination* of this Self-existent Motion must be *every way* at once, the Effect of it could be nothing else but a perpetual *Rest*: Besides, (as there is no End of Absurdities when they once begin,) it must also imply a Contradiction, to suppose that there might *possibly* have been originally *more or less* Motion in the Universe than there *actually* was; which is so very absurd a Consequence, that *Spinoza* himself, though he expressly asserts all Things to be *Necessary*, yet seems

* pag. 24.

seems ashamed here * to speak out his Opinion, or rather plainly contradicts himself in the Question about the Original of Motion. But if it be said that Motion, without any *Necessity* in its own Nature, and without any External Necessary Cause, has existed from Eternity, merely by an Endless Successive Communication; as † *Spinoza*, inconsistently enough, seems to assert; This I have before shown, (in the Proof of the * *Second* General Proposition of this Discourse,) to be a plain Contradiction. It remains therefore, that Motion must of Necessity be Originally Caused by Something that is Intelligent; or else there never could have been any such Thing as Motion in the World: And consequently the Self-existent Being, the Original Cause of all Things, (whatever it be supposed to be,) must of Necessity be an *Intelligent Being*.

From hence it follows again, that the *material World*, cannot possibly be the Original Self-Existent Being. For since the Self-Existent Being, is demonstrated to be Intelligent; and the Material World plainly is not so; it follows that the Material World cannot possibly be Self-Existent. What some have fondly imagined concerning a *Soul of the World*, if thereby they mean a Created, Dependent Being; signifies nothing in the present Argument; But if they understand thereby Something Necessary and Self-Existent; then it is nothing else, but a false, corrupt, and imperfect Notion of *God*.

* *Spinoza Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 33. compared with Part. II. Prop. 13, Lemma 3.*

† *Corpus motum vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, & illud iterum ab alio, & sic in infinitum. Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.*

* *pag. 12*
† *etc.*

That the
Self-exist-
ent Being
must be a
Free Agent.

IX. The Self-Existent and Original Cause of all Things, is not a necessary Agent, but a Being indued with Liberty and Choice. The contrary to this Proposition, is the Foundation and the Sum of what Spinoza and his Followers have asserted concerning the Nature of God. What Reasons or Arguments they have offered for their Opinion, I shall have occasion to consider briefly in my Proof of the Proposition it self. The Truth of which, appears

This a ne-
cessary Con-
sequent of
the forego-
ing Proposi-
tion.

1st, In that it is a Necessary Consequence of the foregoing Proposition. For Intelligence without Liberty (as I there hinted) is really (in respect of any Power, Excellence, or Perfection,) no Intelligence at all. It is indeed a Consciousness, but it is merely a Passive One; a Consciousness, not of Acting, but purely of being Acted upon. Without Liberty, nothing can in any tolerable Propriety of Speech, be said to be an Agent or Cause of any thing. For to Act necessarily, is really and properly not to Act at all, but only to be Acted upon. What therefore Spinoza and his Followers assert concerning the Production of all Things

*Ex necessitate Divinae naturae, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent. *Ethic. Par. 1. Prop. 16.*

* from the Necessity of the Divine Nature, is mere Cant and Words without any meaning at all. For if by the Necessity of the Divine Nature they understand not the Perfection and Rectitude of his Will, whereby God is unalterably determined to do always what is best in the whole; (as confessedly they do not; because this is consistent with the most perfect Liberty and Choice;) but on the contrary mean

an Absolute and strictly Natural Necessity: It follows evidently, that when they say, God by the Necessity of his Nature, is the Cause and Author of all things; they understand him to be a Cause or Agent in no other Sense, than as if a Man should say that a Stone, by the Necessity of its Nature, is the Cause of its own falling and striking the Ground; which is really not to be an Agent or Cause at all; but their Opinion amounts to this, that all things are equally Self-Existent, and consequently that the Material World is God; which I have before proved to be a Contradiction. In like manner, when they speak of the Intelligence and Knowledge of God; they mean to attribute these Powers to him in no other Sense, than the antient *Hylozoicks* attributed them to all Matter; that is, that a Stone, when it falls, has a Sensation and Consciousness; but That Consciousness is no Cause at all or Power of Acting. Which kind of Intelligence, in any tolerable Propriety of Speech, is no Intelligence at all: And consequently the Arguments that proved the Supreme Cause to be properly an Intelligent and Active Being, do also undeniably prove that he is likewise indued with Liberty and Choice, which alone is the Power of Acting.

See a very remarkable Passage of Mr Hobbs cited above, pag. 59.

Proved further from the Arbitrary

Disposition of Things in the World; with an

Answer to Spinoza's Arguments for the Necessity of all Things.

2dly, If the Supreme Cause, is not a Being indued with Liberty and Choice, but a mere Necessary Agent, whose Actions are all as absolutely and naturally Necessary as his Existence: Then it will follow, that nothing which is not, could possibly have been; and that nothing which is, could possibly not have been; and that no Mode or Circum-

stance of the Existence of any thing, could possibly have been in any respect otherwise, than it now actually is. All which being evidently most false and absurd : it follows on the contrary, that the Supreme Cause is not a mere necessary Agent, but a Being indued with Liberty and Choice.

* Alii putant, Deum esse causam liberam, propterea quod potest, ut putant, efficere ut ea quæ ex ejus natura sequi diximus, hoc est, quæ in ejus potestate sunt, non fiant; sed hoc idem est ac si dicerent quod Deus potest efficere, ut ex natura trianguli non sequatur, ejus tres angulos æquales esse duobus rectis. — Ego me satis clare ostendisse puto, a summa Dei Potentia Omnia necessario effluxisse, vel semper eadem necessitate sequi; eodem modo ac ex natura trianguli ab æterno & in æternum sequitur, ejus tres angulos æquari duobus rectis. *Ethic. Par. I. Schol. ad Prop. 17.*

Omnia ex necessitate naturæ divinæ determinata sunt; non tantum ad existendum, sed etiam ad certo modo existendum & operandum; nullumq; datur Contingens. *Demonstrat. Prop. 29.*

Si res alterius naturæ potuissent esse, vel alio modo ad operandum determinari; ut naturæ ordo alius esset: ergo Dei etiam natura alia posset esse quam jam est. *Prop. 33. Demonstrat.*

Quicquid conceipimus in Dei Potestate esse, id necessario est. *Prop. 35.*

Deum non operari ex libertate Voluntatis: *Corol. ad Prop. 32.*

Res nullo alio modo, neq; alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt quam productæ sunt. *Prop. 33.*

† Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent. *Prop. 16.*

The * Consequence; viz. that if the Supreme Cause be a Necessary Agent, then nothing which is not, could possibly have been; and nothing which is, could possibly either not have been, or have been different from what 'tis; is expressly owned by Spinoza to be the unavoidable Consequence of his own Opinion: And accordingly he endeavours to maintain, that no Thing, or Mode of Existence of any Thing, could possibly have been in any respect different from what it now actually is: His Reasons are; (1.) because † from an Infinitely perfect Nature, infinite Things in infinite Manners, must

needs proceed; and (2.) * because, if any thing, could possibly be otherwise than it is, the Will and Nature of God must be supposed capable of change; and (3.) † because if all possible Things in all possible Manners do not always and necessarily exist, they never can All exist; but some Things, that do not exist, will still always be possible only, and never can actually exist; and so the Actual Omnipotence of God is taken away. The first of these Arguments, is a plain begging the Question; For, that an infinitely Perfect Nature, is able indeed to produce Infinite Things in Infinite Manners, is certainly true; but that it must always actually do so, by an absolute Necessity of Nature, without any Power of Choice, either as to Time or Manner or Circumstances, does by no means follow from the Perfection of its Nature, unless it be first supposed to be a Necessary Agent; which is the very Question begged, that was to be proved. The second Argument, is (if possible) still weaker; For how does it follow, if God, according to his eternal unerring Purpose and Infinite Wisdom, produces different Things at different Times and in different Manners; that therefore the Will and Nature of God, is changeable? It might exactly as well be argued, that if God (according to Spinoza's Supposition) does Always necessarily produce all possible Differences

* Si res alterius naturæ potuissent esse, vel alio modo ad operandum determinari; ut naturæ Ordo alius esset: Ergo Dei etiam natura alia posset esse quam jam est. Prop. 33. Demonstrat.

† Imo adversarii, [qui negant ex necessitate divinæ naturæ omnia necessario fluere,] Dei Omnipotentiam negare videntur. Coguntur enim fateri, Deum infinita creabilia intelligere, quæ tamen nunquam creare poterit. Nam alias, si scilicet omnia, quæ intelligit, crearet; suam, juxta ipsos, exhauriret Omnipotentiam, & se imperfectum redderet. Ut igitur Deum perfectum statuunt, eo rediguntur, ut simul statuere debeant, ipsum non posse omnia efficere, ad quæ ejus potentia se extendit. Coroll. ad Prop. 17.

and *Varieties* of Things; therefore his Will and Nature is *Always* necessarily infinitely various, unequal, and dissimilar to it self. And as to the *third* Argument, (which is mere Metaphysical Trifling;) it is just such Reasoning as if a Man should argue, [that if all possible [Eternal] Duration be not Always actually Exhausted, it never can be All Exhausted; and that therefore so the *Eternity* of God is taken away: Which sort of arguing, every one at first sight discerns the Weakness of.

But whatever the Arguments were, and if they were never so much more plausible than they really are; Yet the *Assertion* it self, [*viz: That no Thing or Mode of Existence of any Thing, could possibly have been made in any respect different from what it actually is,*] is so palpably absurd and false, so contradictory to Experience and the Nature of Things, and to the most obvious and common Reason of Mankind; that of it self it immediately and upon the first hearing, sufficiently confutes any Principle of which it is a Consequence. For all things in the World appear plainly to be the most *Arbitrary* that can be imagined; and to be wholly the Effects, not of *Necessity*, but of Wisdom and Choice. A *Necessity* indeed of *Fitness*; that is, that things could not have been Otherwise than they are, without diminishing the Beauty, Order, and Well-being of the Whole; there may be, and (as far as we can apprehend) there certainly Is: But this is so far from serving our Adversaries Purpose, that on the contrary 'tis a direct Demonstration that all things were made and ordered by a *Free* and a *Wise* Agent.

That

That therefore which I affirm, contradictory to *Spinoza's* Assertion, is, That there is not the least appearance of an *Absolute Necessity of Nature*, (so as that any Variation would imply a Contradiction,) in any of these Things. *Motion* it self, and all its Quantities and Directions, with the Laws of *Gravitation*, are intirely Arbitrary; and might possibly have been altogether different from what they now are. The *Number* and *Motion* of the *Heavenly Bodies*, have no manner of Necessity in the Nature of the Things themselves. The *Number* of the Planets, might have been greater or less: Their *Motion* upon their own Axes, might have been in any proportion swifter or slower than it now is: And the *Direction* of all their progressive Motions, both of the primary and secondary Planets, uniformly from West to East, (when by * the Motion of *Comets* it appears there was no Necessity but that they might as easily have moved in all imaginable transverse Directions;) is an evident proof that these things are solely the Effect of Wisdom and Choice. There is not the least appearance of Necessity, but that all these things might possibly have been infinitely varied from their present Constitution; and (as the late improvements in Astronomy discover) they are actually liable to very great Changes. Every thing upon *Earth*, is still more evidently arbitrary; and plainly the Product, not of Necessity,

* Nam dum Cometæ moventur in Orbibus valde eccentricis, undiq; & quoquo-versum in omnes cæli partes; utiq; nullo modo fieri potuit, ut cæco fato tribuendum sit, quod Planetæ in orbibus concentricis Motu consimili ferantur eodem omnes. — Tam miram uniformitatem in Planetarum Systemate, necessario fatendum est Intelligentia & Consilio fuisse effectam. *Newton Optic. pag. 345.*

* Res nullo alio modo, neq; alio Ordine, a Deo produci poterunt, quam produci solent. *Spinoza, ut supra.* necessity, but Will. What absolute Necessity, for just such a Number of *Species* of *Animals* or *Plants*? or who without blushing dare affirm, that * neither the Form, nor Order, nor any the minutest Circumstance or Mode of Existence of any of these Things, could possibly have been in the least diversified by the Supreme Cause?

To give but one Instance: In all the greater Species of *Animals*, Where was the Necessity for that * conformity

* Idemq; dici possit de uniformitate illa, quæ est in corporibus Animalium: viz. necessario fatendum est, Intelligentia & Consilio fuisse effectam. *Newton Optic. pag. 346.*

we observe in the Number and Likeness of all their Principal Members? and How would it have been a Contradiction, to suppose any or all of them varied from what they now are? To suppose indeed the continuance of such Monsters, as *Lucretius* imagines to have perished for want of their principal Organs of Life, is really a Contradiction; But how would it have been a Contradiction for a whole Species of *Horses* or *Oxen*, to have subsisted with *Six Legs* or *Four Eyes*? But 'tis a shame to insist longer upon so plain an Argument.

It might have been objected with much more Plausibleness, that the Supreme Cause cannot be Free, because He must needs do always what is best in the whole. But this would not at all serve *Spinoza's* Purpose. For this is a Necessity, not of Nature and Fate, but of Fitness and Wisdom; a Necessity, consistent with the greatest Freedom and most perfect Choice. For the only Foundation of this Necessity, is such an unalterable Rectitude of Will, and Perfection of Wisdom, as

makes

Being and Attributes of God.

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makes it impossible for a Wise Being to resolve to Act Foolishly; or for a Nature infinitely Good, to Choose to do that which is Evil. *Of which I shall have Occasion to speak more hereafter, when I come to deduce the Moral Attributes of God.*

3dly. If there be any Final Cause of any *The same* thing in the Universe; then the Supreme *proved also* Cause, is not a Necessary, but a Free Agent. *from Final Causes.* This Consequence also, *Spinoza* acknowledges to be unavoidable: And therefore he has no other way left, but with a strange Confidence to † expose all Final Causes, as the Fictions of ignorant and superstitious Men: And to * laugh at those who are so foolish and childish as to fancy, that *Eyes* were designed and fitted to see with, *Teeth* to chew with, *Food* to be eaten for Nourishment, the *Sun* to give Light, &c. I suppose it will not be thought, that when once a Man comes to this, he is to be disputed with any longer. Whoever pleases, may, for satisfaction on this Head, consult *Galen de Ufu Partium*, *Tully de natura Deorum*, *Mr Boyle of Final Causes*, and *Mr Ray of the Wisdom of God in the Creation*. I shall only observe this One Thing; that the greater the Improvements and Discoveries are, which are daily made in Astronomy and Natural Philosophy; the more clearly is this Question continually determined, to the Shame and Confusion of Atheists.

† Naturam finem nullum sibi præfixum habere; & omnes causas Finales, nihil nisi humana esse Figmenta. *Appendix ad Prop. 36.*

* Oculos ad Videndum, dentes ad masticandum, herbas & animantia ad alimentum, Solem ad illuminandum, mare ad alendum pisces, &c. *Ibid.*

Nullas unquam rationes circa res naturales a Fine, quem Deus aut Natura in ijs faciendis sibi proposuit, desumemus. *Cartes Princip. Par. I, § 28.*

From the
finiteness of
Created
Beings.

4thly. If the Supreme Cause be a mere Necessary Agent, it is impossible any Effect or Product of That Cause should be *Finite*. For since that which acts necessarily, cannot govern or direct its own Actions; but must necessarily produce whatever can be the Effect or Product of its Nature: 'Tis plain, every Effect of such an Infinite Uniform Nature, acting every where necessarily alike; must of Necessity be Immense, or Infinite in Extension: And so no Creature in the Universe could possibly be Finite: Which is infinitely absurd and contrary to Experience. *Spinoza*, to shuffle off this Absurdity, expresses the Consequence of his Doctrine thus; That

* Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 16.*

* from the Necessity of the Divine Nature, infinite Things (meaning infinite in Number) in infinite Manners must needs follow: But whoever reads his

Demonstration of this Proposition, can hardly miss to observe, (if he be at all used to such Speculations,) that if it proved any thing at all, it would equally prove, that from the Necessity of the Divine Nature, only Infinite Things (meaning Infinite in Extension) can possibly arise. Which Demonstration alone, is a sufficient Confutation of the Opinion it was designed to establish.

And from
the Impossibility of an
Infinite
Succession
of Causes.

5thly. If the Supreme Cause be not a Free and Voluntary Agent; then in every Effect, (for instance, in *Motion*,) there must have been a Progression of Causes in *infinitum*, without any Original Cause at all. For if there be no Liberty any where; then there is no Agent; no Cause, Mover, Principle, or Beginning of *Motion* any where: Every thing

in the Universe must be *Passive*, and nothing *Active*; Every thing *Moved*, and no *Mover*; Every thing *Effect*, and nothing *Cause*. *Spinoza* indeed, (as has been already observed,) refers all things to the *Necessity of the Divine Nature*, as their real Cause and Original: But this is mere Cant, and Words without any Signification; and will not at all help him over the present Difficulty. For if by things Existing through the *Necessity of the Divine Nature*, he means *Absolutely a Necessity of Existence*; so as to make the World, and every thing in it, *Self-existent*; then it follows (as I have before shown) that it must be a Contradiction in Terms, to suppose *Motion*, &c, not to Exist; which *Spinoza* himself is ashamed to assert. But if therefore by the *Necessity of the Divine Nature*, he means only the *Necessary following of an Effect from the Cause*, or, the *Cause necessarily producing its Effect*; this *Necessity* must still always be determined by something antecedent, and so on infinitely: And this, *Spinoza* (though sometime he seems to mean the other and equally absurd Sense) expressly owns in some Places to be his Meaning. * *There can be no Volition,*

saith he, but from some Cause, which Cause must likewise be caused by some other Cause, and so on infinitely. Again, Will, † saith he, belongs to the Nature of God, no otherwise than Motion and Rest do; So that God can no more properly be said to act by the Liberty of his Will, than by the Liberty of Motion and Rest.

agere, quam dici potest ex libertate Motus & Quietis agere. Coroll. ad Prop. 32.

* *Unaquæq; Volitio non potest existere, neq; ad operandum determinari; nisi ab alia causa determinetur, & hæc rursus ab alia, & sic porro in infinitum? Prop. 32. Demonstr.*

† *Voluntas ad Dei naturam non magis pertinet, quam reliqua naturalia; sed ad ipsam eodem modo sese habet, ut motus & Quies.*

Deus non magis dici potest ex Libertate Voluntatis

And

And what the Original of Motion and Rest is, he tells us in these Words:

* *Corpus motum vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio; & illud iterum ab alio; & sic in infinitum. Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.*

* *Every Body in Motion, or at Rest, must have been determined to that Motion or Rest by some other Body, which must itself likewise have been determined by a third; and so on in infinitum.* And thus, since Motion is not in any one of its Stages of

Communication a Necessary Self-Existent Being, (because the Body moved, may always without a Contradiction have been imagined to be at Rest, and is supposed not to have Motion from it self, but from another;) the Opinion of Spinoza plainly recurs to *An Infinite Succession of dependent Beings produced one from another in an endless Progression, without any Original Cause at all.* Which Notion I have already (in the Proof of the second General Head of this Discourse) demonstrated to imply a Contradiction. And since therefore there is no other possible way to avoid this Absurdity, but by granting that there must be somewhere a Principle of Motion and Action, which is *Liberty*; I suppose it by this time sufficiently proved, that the Supreme Cause must be a Being indued with *Liberty* and Choice.

pag. 12.
Etc.

That Liberty is not in it self an Impossible and contradictory Notion.

From what has been said upon this Head, it sufficiently appears, that *Liberty* is not in it self, and in the very Notion of the Thing, an absolute Contradiction and Impossibility; as the Pleaders for Necessity and Fate contend that it is, and place the chief strength of their Argument in that Supposition. For that

that which actually is; is certainly not impossible: and it has already been proved, that Liberty actually is; nay, it is impossible for it not to be, in the first and Supreme Cause. The Principal Argument used by the Maintainers of Fate against the Possibility of Liberty, is this: That since every thing must have a Cause, † every Volition or Determination of the Will of an Intelligent Being, must, as all other things, arise from some Cause, and That Cause from some other Cause, and so on infinitely. But now (besides that in This sort of Reasoning, these Men always ignorantly confound *Moral Motives* with *Physical Efficients*, between which Two things there is no manner of relation: Besides This, I say,) this very Argument really proves the direct contrary to what they intend. For since every thing must indeed have a Cause of its Being, either from without, or in the Necessity of its own Nature; and it is a plain Contradiction (as has already been demonstrated) to suppose an infinite Series of dependent Effects, none of which are Necessary in Themselves or Self-Existent; therefore it is impossible but there must be in the Universe some Being, whose Existence is founded in the Necessity of its Own Nature, and who being acted upon by Nothing beyond it self, must of Necessity have in it self a Principle of Acting, or Power of beginning Motion, which is the Idea of Liberty. 'Tis true, this Argument proves only the Liberty of the First and Supreme Cause; and extends not indeed to any Created

† Mens ad hoc vel illud volendum determinatur a Causa, quæ etiam ab alia determinata est, & hæc iterum ab alia, & sic in infinitum. Spinoza Ethic Par. II. Prop. 48.

pag. 12
etc.

ted Being: But it evinces in General, (which is sufficient to my present purpose,) that Liberty is so far from being impossible and contradictory in it self, that on the contrary it is impossible but that it must really Be somewhere; And this being once established, it will be easie to shew hereafter, that it is a Power capable of being communicated to Created Beings; of which in its proper place.

That the Self-existent Being, must be All powerful.

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X. *The Self-Existent Being, the Supreme Cause of all Things, must of Necessity have infinite Power.* This Proposition is evident, and undeniable. For since nothing (as has been already proved) can possibly be Self-Existent, besides Himself; and consequently all Things in the Universe were made by Him, and are entirely dependent upon Him; and all the Powers of all Things are derived from Him, and must therefore be perfectly Subject and Subordinate to Him: 'Tis manifest that nothing can make any Difficulty or Resistance to the Execution of his Will; but he must of Necessity have absolute Power to do every thing he pleases, with the perfectest ease, and in the perfectest Manner, at once and in a Moment, whenever he Wills it. The Descriptions the Scripture gives of *this Power*, are so lively and emphatical, that I cannot forbear mentioning one or two Passages: Thus Job 9. 4. *He is wise in Heart, and mighty in Strength; — which removeth the Mountains, and they know it not; which overturneth them in his Anger; Which shaketh the Earth out of her place, and the Pillars thereof tremble: Which commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the Stars: Which alone spreadeth out the Heavens,*

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vens, and treadeth upon the Waves of the Sea: Which doth great things past finding out, yea and Wonders without number. Again, Hell is naked before him, and Destruction hath no covering: He stretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the Earth upon nothing: He bindeth up the Waters in his thick Clouds, and the Cloud is not rent under them: The Pillars of Heaven tremble, and are astonished at his Reproof: He divideth the Sea with his Power, and by his Understanding he smiteth through the Proud: Lo, these are part of his Ways, but how little a Portion is heard of him? But the Thunder of his Power, who can understand? Job 26. 6. So likewise, Isaiah 40. 12. Who has measured the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand? and meted out Heaven with the Span? and comprehended the Dust of the Earth in a Measure? and weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Ballance? Behold, the Nations are as a drop of the Bucket, and are counted as the small Dust of the Balance; behold, he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing: All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than Nothing and Vanity: To whom then will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him? But I do not urge Authority to the Persons I am at present speaking to: 'Tis sufficiently evident from Reason, that the Supreme Cause must of Necessity be Infinitely Powerful. The only Question is, what the true meaning of what we call Infinite Power, is: and to what things it must be understood to extend, or not to extend.

Now in determining this Question, there are some Propositions, about which there is no dispute. Which therefore I shall but just mention: As

1st,

Of working
Contradi-
ctions.

1st. That infinite Power reaches to all Possible things; but cannot be said to extend to the working any thing which implies a Contradiction: As, that a Thing should *be* and *not be* at the same time; that the same thing should *be made* and *not be made*, or *have been* and *not have been*; that *twice two* should *not make four*, or that *That which is necessarily False*, should *be True*. The Reason whereof is plain: Because a Power of making a Thing to be, at the same time that it is not; is only a Power of doing that which is Nothing, that is, no Power at all.

Or Natural
and Moral
Evils.

2^{dly}. Infinite Power cannot be said to extend to those things, which imply *Natural* Imperfection in the Being to whom such Power is ascribed: As, that it should destroy its own Being, weaken it self, or the like. These Things imply *Natural* Imperfection; and are by all Men confessed to be such, as cannot possibly belong to the Necessary Self-existent Being. There are also other things which imply Imperfection in another kind, *v.z.* *Moral* Imperfection: Concerning which, Atheism takes away the Subject of the Question, by denying wholly the Difference of Moral Good and Evil; and therefore I shall omit the Consideration of them, till I come to deduce the *Moral* Attributes of God.

But some other Instances there are, in the Question about the Extent of *Infinite Power*; wherein the Principal Difference between us and the Atheists, (next to the Question, whether the Supreme Cause be an *Intelligent Being*, or not,) does in a great measure consist. As

1st.

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1st. that infinite Power includes a Power of the
of Creating *Matter*. This has been constantly ^{Power of}
denied by all Atheists, both Ancient and ^{Creating}
Modern; and as constantly affirmed by all ^{Matter.}
who believe the Being, and have just Notions
of the Attributes of God. The only Reason
which the Atheists have, or can pretend to al-
ledge for their Opinion; is, that the Thing is
in its own Nature absolutely *Impossible*. But
how does it appear to be impossible? Why,
only because they are not able to comprehend
How it can be. For, to reduce it to a Con-
tradiction, (which is the alone real Impof-
sibility,) this they are by no means able to do.
For, to say that something which once was
not, may since have begun to exist; is nei-
ther directly, nor by any Consequence what-
soever, to assert that That which *is not*, can
be, while it *is Not*; or that That which *is*, can
Not be, while it *is*. 'Tis true; We, who have
been used to converse only with Generations
and Corruptions; and never saw any thing
Made or *Created*, but only *Formed* or *Framed*;
are apt to endeavour to conform our Idea of
Creation, to that of *Formation*; and to ima-
gine, that as in all *Formations* there is some
Pre-existing *Matter*, out of which a thing is
Formed; so in *Creation* there must be consid-
ered a Pre-existent *Nothing*, out of which, as
out of a real *Material Cause*, a Thing is *Crea-*
ted; which looks indeed somewhat like a Con-
tradiction: But this is only a Confusion of
Idea's; just like Childrens imagining that
Darkness is some real thing, which in the
Morning is driven away by the Light, or
transformed into it: Whereas the true Noti-
on of *Creation*, is not a *Forming* Something
out

out of Nothing, as out of a *Material Cause*; but only a bringing Something into Being, that before had no Being at all; or a Causing Something to Exist Now, that did not Exist Before; or which, without this Cause, would not have Existed: Which no Man can ever reduce to a Contradiction; any more than the *Formation* of any thing into a Shape which it had not before, can be reduced to a Contradiction. And indeed, if they would speak out the Truth, the Sum of what all Atheists, whether Antient or Modern, have ever said upon this Head, amounts to no more but this one foolish Argument: That Matter could not begin to exist, when *it was not*; because this is supposing it to Be, before it was: And that it could not begin to Exist, when *it was*; because this is supposing it not to Be, after it was. Which is just such an Argument, as That whereby a certain Philosopher demonstrated, that there can be no such thing as *Motion* at all; because a Body can neither move in the place where *it is*, nor in the place where *it is not*. The Arguments are exactly alike; And the same Answer will serve indifferently for them Both.

But further: The *Creation of Matter* is a thing not only *not impossible* in itself, but what moreover even by bare Reason is *demonstrated to be True*. For it is a Contradiction (as I have shown above) to suppose

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Matter necessarily Existing.

2dly. 'Tis Possible to Infinite Power, to Create an *Immaterial Cogitative Substance*, indued with a *Power of beginning Motion*, and with a *Liberty of Will or Choice*. This also has been always denied by all Atheists. And be-

Of the Power of creating Immaterial Cogitative Substances.

cause

cause it is a Proposition of the greatest Consequence to Religion and Morality, therefore I shall be particular in endeavouring the Proof of the several Parts of it.

First then, it is possible to infinite Power, to Create an *Immaterial* Cogitative Substance. That there can be such a Thing as a Cogitative Substance, that is, a Substance indued with Consciousness and Thought, is granted by all; because every Mans' own Experience convinces him, that He himself is such a Substance. Further, That if there be, or can be, any such thing as *Immaterial* Substances; that then it is most reasonable to believe, that such Substances as are indued with Consciousness and Thought, [Properties the farthest distant from the known Properties of Matter, and the most unlike them, that can possibly be imagined,] are those *Immaterial* Substances; will also, I think, be granted by all Men. The only thing therefore, that remains to be proved, is this; That *Immaterial* Substances are not impossible, or, that a Substance *Immaterial* is not a contradictory Notion. Now whoever asserts that it is contradictory; must affirm, that whatever is not Matter, is nothing; and that, to say any thing Exists which is not Matter, is saying that there Exists something which is nothing. Which in other Words is plainly this; That whatever we have not an Idea of, is nothing, and impossible to Be. For there is no other way to reduce *Immaterial Substance* to a Contradiction, but by supposing *Immaterial* to signify the same as *Having no Existence*; And there is no possible way to prove That, but by saying we have no Idea of it, and there-

fore it neither has nor can have any Existence. By which same Argument (even supposing it to be true, which yet is indeed most false, that we have a clear Idea of the Substance of Matter, though we have none at all of any Immaterial Substance;) a Man born Blind may demonstrate Irrefragably, that *Light* or *Colour* is an Impossible and Contradictory Notion, because it is not a *Sound* or a *Smell*. For the Power of seeing *Light* or *Colour*, is to a Man born Blind, altogether as incomprehensible and absolutely beyond the reach of all his Ideas, as either the Operations and Perceptions, or even the Simple Essence of a Pure Immaterial Substance or Spirit, can be to any of Us. If therefore the Blind Man's want of Idea's be not a sufficient Proof of the Impossibility of *Light* or *Colour*; how comes our bare want of Idea's, to be a Demonstration of the Impossibility of the Being of Immaterial Substances? A blind Man, they will say, has *Testimony* of the Existence of *Light*: Very true; So also have we, of the Existence of Immaterial Substances: But, I hope, an Atheist will not put the Issue of his Cause upon *Testimony*, whatever he does. But there is this further advantage on our side in the Comparison; that a Blind Man, excepting the *Testimony* of Others, finds not by any reasoning within himself, the least likelihood or probability, no not in the lowest possible degree, that there can be any such thing as *Light* or *Colour*; But we, besides *Testimony*, have great and strong Arguments both from Experience and Reason, that there are such things as Immaterial Substances, though we have no Knowledge of their Simple Essence:

(As

(As indeed of the *Substance* even of *Matter* it self, its *Simple Substance*, considered as abstract from and as the *Foundation* of That *Essential Property* of *Solidity*, we have no *Idea*: For to say that *Extension* is the *Substance* of *Matter*, is the same thing as saying that *Duration* or that *Existence* is the *Substance* of *Matter*.) We have, I say, great and strong Arguments both from *Experience* and *Reason*, that there are such things as *Immaterial Substances*, though we have no *Idea* of their *Simple Essence*. Even the very first and most universal Principle of *Gravitation* itself, in all *inanimate Matter*; since it is ever *Proportional*, not at all to the *Surfaces* of *Bodies*, or of their *Particles* in any possible *Supposition*, but exactly to the *Solid Content* of *Bodies*; 'tis evident it cannot be caused by *Matter* acting upon the *Surfaces* of *Matter*, which is all *It* can do; but must be caused by something which continually penetrates its *Solid Substance*. But in *Animals*, which have a *Power* of *Self-motion*; and in the perfecter *Sorts* of them, which have still higher *Faculties*; the thing is yet more evident: For we see and feel, and observe daily in ourselves and others, such *Powers* and *Operations* and *Perceptions*, as undeniably evince themselves either to be the *Properties* of *Immaterial Substances*; or else it will follow that *Matter* is something, of whose inmost *Substance* and *Essential Powers* we have altogether as little *Idea*, as we have of *Immaterial Beings*; and then how are *Immaterial Substances* more impossible than *Material*? But of this, more hereafter.

Of the Im-
materiality
of Human
Souls.

See, Letter
to Mr Dod-
well, with
the Four
Defenses
of it.

From what has been said on this Head, it will be easy to answer all the Objections that have been brought by any Atheist against the Notion of *Human Souls* being *Immaterial Substances* distinct from Body. For since

'tis possible there may be such things as *Immaterial Substances*; and since, if any such Substance Can Be, there is all the Reason in the World to believe that *Conscious and Thinking Substance* Is such; these Properties being the most Remote from the known Properties of Matter, that are possible to be conceived: The Foundation of all the Objections against the *Immateriality* of the Soul, is intirely taken away. I shall not now tarry to consider the Objections in particular, which have been often and fully answered by learned Pens; but shall only mention One, on which all the rest depend, and to which they may all be reduced. And it

is This: * That seeing the only means we have of Perception, are the *Five Senses*; and these all plainly depend upon the *Organs of the Body*; therefore the Soul without the Body, can have no Perception, and and consequently is Nothing. Now (besides that these very Senses or Perceptions, however they may be obstructed by bodily Indisposition, and so do indeed depend upon the *Organs of the Body* as to their present *Exercise*, yet in their *Nature* are really entirely

* —. Si immortalis natura animae est,

Et sentire potest secreta a corpore nostro;

Quinq; (ut opinor) eam faciundum est Sensibus auctam:

Nec ratione alia nosmet proponere nobis

Possumus infernas animas Acherunte vagare:

Pictores itaq; & scriptorum secla priora

Sic animas introduxerunt sensibus auctas.

At neq; seorsum oculi, &c. —

Nec sensus ipsi seorsum consistere possunt,

tiely distinct Powers, and cannot possibly, as has been * before shown, be absolutely founded in, or arise from, any of the known Properties or Qualities of Matter; Besides this, I say;) of Him that thus argues, I would only ask this one Question; Are our Five Senses, by an Absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing, All and the only Possible Ways of Perception? And is it impossible and contradictory, that there should be any Being in the Universe, indued with ways of Perception different from these that are the result of Our present Composition? Or are these things, on the contrary, purely Arbitrary; and the same Power that gave Us these, may have given others to Other Beings, and might (if he had pleas'd) have given Us others in this present State, and may yet have made us capable of different ones in Another State? If they be purely Arbitrary; then the want of these, does by no means infer a total want of Perception; but the same Soul, which in the present State has the Powers of Reflexion, Reason and Judgment, which are Faculties entirely different from Sense; may as easily in another State have different ways even of Perception also. But if any one say, that these Senses of ours are Necessarily the only ways of Perception; how does that appear? And is it not infinitely more reasonable to suppose, that this is a * mere Prejudice, arising from Custom, and an attending to bare Sense in opposition to

Naribus atq; manib; atq; oculis, atq; auribus, atq; Lingua; nec per se possunt sentire, nec esse. *Lucret. lib. 3.*

Ὅσον γὰρ ὅτιν ἀρχὴν ἢ ἐνέργειαν σωματικὴν, διὰ τὸν ὅτιν πάντα ἀνευ σώματος ἀδύνατον ὑπερχειν ὅτις βαδίζειν ἀνευ ποδῶν. *Aristot.*

* Has tamen imagines [mortuorum] Loqui volebant;

Reason?

quod fieri nec sine lingua, nec sine palato, nec sine lacu- cium, laterum, pulmonum vi & figura potest. Nihil enim Animo (speaking of such as attributed to Spirits the same Powers and Senses only, as they saw Men endued with in this present State,) videre poterant: Ad Oculos omnia referebant. Magni autem ingenii est, revocare mentem a sensibus, & cogitationem a consuetudine abducere. Cicero Tuscul. Quas. I.

Reason? For suppose Men had been created only with *Four* Senses, and had never known the use of *Sight*; would they not then have had the same Reason to conclude there were but *Four* possible ways of Perception, as they have. Now to fancy that there are but *Five*? And would they not then have thought *Sight* to have been an Impossible, Chimerical, and merely imaginary Power; with absolutely the same Reason, as they now presume the Faculties of immaterial Beings to be so? that is, with *no Reason at all*. One would think, Men should be ashamed therefore to be so Vain, as merely from their own Negative Ignorance, without any appearance or pretense of any *Positive* Argument, to argue against the Possibility of the Being of Things, which (excepting only that they cannot frame to themselves an *Image* or *Notion* of them) there is a Concurrence of all the Reasons in the World to persuade them that such Things Really are. And then as to the Difficulty of Conceiving the Nature and Manner of the *Union* between Soul and Body; We know altogether as much of That, as we do of the Nature of the Union or Cohesion of the Infinitely divisible parts of Body, to Body; which yet no Man doubts of: And therefore our Ignorance can be no more an Argument against the Truth of the One, than it is a Bar to our Belief of the Other.

Secondly,

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Secondly, It is possible to Infinite Power, ^{Of enduing} to indue a Creature with ^{Creatures} the Power of Begin- ^{with the} ning Motion. This is constantly denied by ^{Power of} all Atheists; because the Consequence of it, ^{beginning} is a *Liberty of Will*, of which I shall have ^{Motion.} Occasion to speak presently. But that the Proposition is true, I thus prove. If the Power of Beginning Motion be in it self a *Possible Thing*; and also be *Possible to be communicated*; Then a Creature may be indued with That Power. Now that the Power of Beginning Motion is in it self a *Possible Thing*, I have already proved, by showing that there must *Necessarily* be *somewhere* a Power of Beginning Motion; because otherwise Motion must have been from Eternity, without any *External Cause* of its Being; and yet it is a Thing that has no Necessity of Existence in its *own Nature*: So that if there be not *somewhere* a Principle or Power of beginning Motion; *Motion* must Exist, without any Cause or Reason at all of its Existence either *within* it self or *from without*; which, as ^{pag. 12} I have before shown, is an Express Contradiction. ^{Gr.} Wherefore a Principle or Power of Beginning Motion, there must of necessity *Be*, somewhere or other; and consequently it is not in it self an Impossible Thing. I add; As a power of Beginning Motion, is not in it self an impossible Thing; because it must of Necessity *Be* in the Supreme Cause: So neither is it impossible to be *Communicated* to Created Beings. The Reason is plain: Because no Powers are Impossible to be Communicated, but only those which imply Self-existence and absolute Independency. That a Subordinate Being should be Self-existent

or absolutely Independent, is indeed a Contradiction; but 'tis no Contradiction to suppose it indued with any Other Power whatsoever, separate from these. I know the Maintainers of Fate, are very confident that a Power of Beginning Motion, is nothing less than being really Independent, or being able to Act Independently from any Superior Cause. But this is only a childish trifling with Words. For a Power of Acting independently *in this Sense*, communicated at the Pleasure of the Supreme Cause, and continued only during the same good Pleasure, is no more a real and absolute Independency; than the Power of *Existing*, (which I suppose the Defenders of Fate are not so fond to make a continual Creation, as they are to make the Power of Self-motion a continual External Impulse;) or than the Power of *being Conscious*, or any other Power whatsoever, can be said to imply Independency. In reality, 'tis altogether as hard to conceive, how *Consciousness* or the Power of *Perception*, should be communicated to a Created Being; as how the Power of *Self-Motion* should be so: Unless *Perception* be Nothing else but a mere Passive Reception of Impulse, which I suppose is as clear that it is not, as that a Triangle is not a Sound, or that a Globe is not a Colour. Yet no Man doubts, but that He himself and all Others have truly a Power of *Perception*: And therefore in like manner, (however hard it may be to Conceive, as to the manner of it; yet since, as has been now proved, it can never be shown to be impossible and expressly contradictory, that a Power of *Self-Motion* should be communicated,) I suppose

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no considering Man can doubt, but that he actually has also a Power of *Self-Motion*. For the Arguments drawn from continual Experience and Observation, to prove that we have such a Power, are so strong; that nothing less than a strict Demonstration that the thing is absolutely impossible and implies an express contradiction, can make us in the least doubt that we have it not. We have all the same Experience, the same Marks and Evidence exactly, of our having really a Power of Self-motion; as the rigidest Fatalist could possibly contrive to require, if he was to make a *Supposition* of a Man's being indued with that Power. There is no one Thing which such a Man can imagine ought to follow from the Supposition of *Self-Motion*, which every Man does not Now as much feel and actually experience in Himself; as it can possibly be imagined any Man would do, supposing the Thing were true. Wherefore to affirm, notwithstanding all this, that the Spirits by which a Man moves the Members of his Body, and ranges the Thoughts of his Mind, are Themselves moved wholly by Air or Subtler Matter inspired into the Body; and That again by other External Matter, and so on; as the Wheels of a Clock are moved by the Weights, and those Weights by Gravitation, and so on; without a Man's having the least Power by any Principle within himself, to think any one Thought, or impell his own Spirits in order to move any Member of his Body: All this is so contrary to Experience and the Reason of Things, that unless the Idea of *Self-motion* were in it self as evidently and Clearly a Contradiction,

as

A Demonstration of the

as that two and two should make fifteen, a Man ought to be ashamed to talk at that Rate. Nay, a Man of any considerable degree of Modesty, would even in that Case be almost tempted rather to doubt the Truth of his Faculties; than to venture boldly to assert one so intolerable an absurdity, merely for the avoiding of another. There are some indeed, who denying Men the Power of *Beginning Motion*, would yet seem in some Manner to account for their Actions, by allowing them a Power of *Determining Motion*. But this also is a mere ludicrous trifling with Words. For if that Power of *Determining Motion*, be no other in a Man, than that which is in a Stone of Reflecting a Ball *one certain way*; this is just nothing at all. But if he has a Power of determining the Motion of his Spirits *any way*, as he himself pleases; this is in all Respects the very same as the Power of *Beginning Motion*.

Of the
Possibility
of induing
a Creature
with Free-
dom or Li-
berty of
Will.

pag. 64.

Thirdly. 'Tis Possible to Infinite Power to endue a Creature with *Freedom or Liberty of Will*. It might suffice that this is at once proved by the same Arguments, and in the same Method, as I just now proved *Self-motion* or a Power of *beginning Motion*, to be possible: viz. because *Liberty* must of necessity Be in the Supreme Cause; (as 'is at large proved in the Ninth General Head of this Discourse;) and therefore cannot be impossible and contradictory in the Nature of the thing it self: And, because it implies no Contradiction to suppose it *communicated*; as being no harder to conceive, than the forementioned Power of *Beginning Motion*: And, because the Ar-
guments

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guments drawn from Experience and Observation, are stronger on the one side of the Question, than those arising merely from the Difficulty of our apprehending the thing, can be on the other. But forasmuch as this is the Question of the greatest Concern of all, in Matters both of Religion and Humane Life; and both *Spinoza* and Mr *Hobbs*, and their Followers, have with great Noise and Confidence denied it: I shall therefore, (not contenting my self with this,) endeavour to show moreover, in particular, the Weakness of the Principal Arguments, by which these Men have pretended to demonstrate, that there cannot possibly be any such Power in Man, as a *Liberty of Will*. As to the propriety of the Terms, whether the Will be properly the Seat of Liberty or not, it is not now to the Purpose to inquire: The Question being, not where the Seat of Liberty is; but whether there be at all in Man any such Power as a Liberty of Choice and of Determining his own Actions; or on the contrary his Actions be all as Necessary, as the Motions of a Clock. The Arguments by which *Spinoza* and Mr *Hobbs*, have attempted to maintain this latter side of the Question, are all plainly reducible to these two.

1st. That since every Effect must needs be produced by some Cause; therefore, as every Motion in a Body must have been caused by the Impulse of some other Body, and the Motion of That by the Impulse of a Third; so every Volition, or Determination of the Will of Man, must needs be produced by some External Cause, and That in like manner be the Effect of some Third: And consequent-

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A Demonstration of the

ly that there cannot possibly be any such Thing in Nature, as Liberty or Freedom of Will.

2dly. That Thinking, and all its Modes, as Willing and the like, are Qualities or Affections of Matter: and consequently, since 'tis manifest that Matter has not in it self a Power of Beginning Motion, or giving it self any manner of Determination whatsoever; therefore 'tis evident likewise, that 'tis impossible there should be any such Thing as Freedom of Will.

*An Answer
to Mr
Hobbs and
Spinoza's*

*Arguments
against the
Possibility
of Liberty.*

Now to these Arguments I oppose, and shall endeavour briefly to demonstrate, the three following Propositions:

1st. That every Effect cannot possibly be the Product of external Causes; but there must of Necessity be Somewhere a Beginning of Operation, or a power of Acting without being antecedently acted upon: And that this Power may be, and is, in *Man*.

2dly. That Thinking and Willing neither are, nor can be, Qualities and Affections of Matter; and consequently not concluded under the Laws thereof.

3dly. That even supposing the Soul not to be a distinct Substance from Body, but that Thinking and Willing could be, and were indeed, only Qualities or Affections of Matter; yet even *This* would not at all affect the present Question, nor prove Freedom of Will

That there to be impossible.

must be

*somewhere
a Beginning
of Operati-
on.*

1st. Every Effect cannot possibly be the Product of external Causes; but there must of necessity be somewhere a Beginning of Operation,

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ration, or a Power of Acting without being antecedently acted upon: And this Power may be, and is, in Man. The several Parts of this Proposition have been already proved in the *Second* and *Ninth* General Heads of this Discourse, and in that part of this *Tenth* Head, which is concerning the Possibility of the Power of self-Motion being communicated to Created Beings. I shall not therefore here repeat the Proofs; but only apply them to *Spinoza's* and *Mr. Hobbs's* Arguments, so far as is necessary to show the weakness of what they have said upon this Head in Opposition to the Possibility of Liberty or Freedom of Will. Now the manner of their Arguing upon this Head, is this. *That every Effect must needs be owing to some Cause; and That Cause must produce the Effect * necessarily;*

because, if it be a Sufficient Cause, the Effect cannot but follow; and if it be not a sufficient Cause, it will not be at all a Cause of that Thing: Thus for instance, † whatever Body is moved, must be moved by some other Body, which it self likewise must be moved by some Third, and so on without End: That the || Will, in like manner, of any voluntary Agent

* Quicumq; unquam Effectus productus sit, productus est a causa necessaria. Nam quod productum est, causam habuit integram, hoc est, omnia ea quibus suppositis Effectum non sequi intelligi non possit: ea vero causa necessaria est. *Hobbs Philosophia prima, cap. 9.*

† Corpus motum vel quiescens, ad Motum vel Quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad Motum vel Quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, & illud ite-

rum ab alio, & sic in infinitum. *Spinoza Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.*

|| Unaquæque Volitio non potest Existere, neque ad operandum determinari, nisi ab alia causa determinetur, & hæc rursus ab alia; & sic porro in infinitum *Id. Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 32. Demonstrat.*

I conceive, nothing taketh beginning from it self, but from the Action of some immediate Agent without it self. And that therefore when first a Man had an Appetite or Will to something,

thing, to which, immediately before, he had no Appetite or Will; the Cause of his Will, is not the Will itself, but something else not in his own disposing. *Hobbs's Debate with Bp. Bramhall, p. 289.*

In mente nulla est absoluta sive libera voluntas; sed mens ad hoc vel illud volendum determinatur a causa, quæ etiam ab alia determinata est, & hæc iterum ab alia, & sic in infinitum. *Spinoza, Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 48.*

** See above, pag. 75.

† Hinc sequitur, Deum non operari ex libertate Voluntatis. *Ethic. Par. I. Coroll. ad Prop. 32.*

must of necessity be ** determined by some external Cause, and not by any Power of determining it self, inherent in it self: And That External Cause, must be determined necessarily by some other Cause, External to It; and so on without End. From all which it evidently appears, that All that these Men urge against the possibility of Freedom, extends equally to all other Beings (not excepting the Supreme) as well as to Men; and † Spinoza in express Words confesses it. Wherefore consequently, whatever noise they make of the mighty Strength and Demon-

strative Force of their Arguments; all that they say, amounts at last to no more but this One most absurd Conclusion; that *there is no where, nor can possibly be, any Principle of Motion or Beginning of Operation at all; but every Thing is caused necessarily by an eternal Chain of Dependent Causes and Effects, without any Independent Original.* All their Arguments therefore on this Head, are already answered in the *Second and Ninth General Heads* of this Discourse; (where I proved that there must of Necessity be an *Original, Independent, and Free Principle of Motion or Action*; and that to suppose an endless Succession of Dependent Causes and Effects, without any Original or First and Self-actuating Principle, is supposing a *Series of dependent Things to be from Eternity produced by Nothing*; which is the very same

pag. 12,¹³
and 64.

same Absurdity and Contradiction, as to suppose Things produced by Nothing at any definite Time; the Ability of Nothing to produce any thing, being plainly the same in Time or in Eternity.) And I have moreover proved *ex abundanti*, in the foregoing part of this Tenth Head, that the Power of beginning Motion is not only possible and certain in it self, but also possible to be communicated to Finite Beings, and actually Is in Man. pag. 87

2dly, Thinking and Willing neither are, That nor can be, Qualities or Affections of Matter; Thinking and consequently are not concluded under the Laws thereof. That 'tis possible there * may be Immaterial Substances, the Notion not implying a Contradiction in it self; hath already been shown under the present General Proposition. Further, That Thinking and Willing are Powers entirely different from Solidity, Figure and Motion; and if they be different, that then they cannot possibly arise from them, or be compounded of them; hath likewise been already proved under the Eighth General Head of this Discourse. It follows therefore, that Thinking and Willing may possibly be, nay that they certainly and necessarily are Faculties or Powers of Immaterial Substances: seeing they cannot possibly be Qualities or Affections of Matter; unless we will confound (as some have done) the Ideas of things; and mean by Matter, not what the Word in all other cases signifies, a solid Substance capable of Division, Figure and Motion, and of whatever Properties can arise from the Modifications of These; but Substance in general, capable of unknown Powers or Properties entirely different from these, and from whatever

whatever can possibly result from These: In which confused Sense of the Word, could *Matter* be supposed never so capable of Thinking and Willing; yet in That sense, (as I shall show presently,) it would signify nothing at all to the Purpose or Advantage of our Adversaries. In the mean Time, how great an Absurdity it is, to suppose Thinking and Willing to be Qualities or Affections of *Matter*, in the Proper and Usual Sense of the Word; may sufficiently appear, without any foreign Argument, from the Senselessness of Mr. *Hobbs's* Own Explication of the Nature and Original of Sensation and

* Ex quo intelligitur, Sensationis immediatam causam esse in eo, quod Sensationis Organum primum & tangit & premit. Si enim organi pars extrema prematur; illa cedente, premetur quoq; pars quæ versus interiora illi proxima est; & ita propagabitur pressio, sive Motus ille, per partes Organi omnes, usq; ad intimam. — Quoniam autem motui ab objecto per media ad Organi partem intimam propagato, fit aliqua totius Organi resistentia sive reactio, per motum ipsius Organi internum naturalem; fit propterea conatus ab objecto, conatus ab Organo contrarius: Ut cum conatus ille ad intimam, ultimus actus sit eorum qui sunt in actu Sensationis; tum demum ex ea reactione aliquandiu durante, ipsum existet *Phantasma*; quod propter conatum versus externa semper videtur tanquam aliquid situm extra Organum. *Hobbs de Sensatione & motu animali.*

† Phantasma est sentiendi Actus. *Id. ibid.*

Consciousness. *The immediate Cause of Sensation,* * saith he, *is this: The Object, or Something flowing from it, presseth the outermost part of the Organ, and That Pressure is communicated to the innermost Parts of the Organ; Where, by the Resistance or Reaction of the Organ, causing a Pressure outwards contrary to the Pressure of the Object inwards, there is made up a Phantasm, or Image: which Phantasm, † saith he, is the Sensation it self. Again; the*

Cause

Cause of Sensation, || saith he, is an Object pressing the Organ; which Pressure is by means of the Nerves conveyed to the Brain, and so to the Heart; where, by the Resistance or Counter-pressure of the Heart outwards, is made an Image or Phantasm, which is Sensation.

Now what is there in all this, that does in any the least measure tend to explain or make intelligible the real and inward Nature of Sense or Consciousness? The Object, by communicating a Pressure through the Organ to the Sensory, does indeed raise a Phantasm or Image, that is, make a certain Impression on the Brain: But Wherein consists the Power of Perceiving this Impression, and of being Sensible of it? Or What Similitude hath this Impression to the Sense it self, that is, to the Thought excited in the Mind? why, exactly the very same, that a Square has to Blueness, or a Triangle to Sound, or a Needle to the Sense of Pain; or the Reflecting of a Tennis Ball, to the Reason and Understanding of a Man. So that Mr. Hobbs's Definition of Sensation; that it is itself, the inmost and formal Nature of it, nothing but the Phantasm or Image made in the Brain by the Pressure communicated from the Object; is in other Words, refining Blueness to be the Image of a Square, or Sound the Picture of a Triangle, or Pain the Similitude of a Sharp-pointed Needle. I do not here misrepresent him in the least.

H

For

|| Causa sensationis est Externum Corpus sive Objectum quod premit Organum proprium; & premendo, (mediantibus Nervis & Membranis,) continuum efficit Motum interorsum ad Cerebrum & inde ad Cor; unde nascitur Cordis resistentia & contrapressio seu *avvovda*, sive Conatus Cordis liberantis se a pressione per motum tendentem extrorsum; qui motus propterea apparet tanquam aliquid externum: Atq; Apparitio hæc, sive Phantasma, est id quod vocamus Sensationem.

Leviathan Cap. 1.

* Quæ qualitates Omnes nominari solent sensibiles, & sunt in ipso objecto nihil aliud præter materiæ motum, quo Objectum in Organa Sensuum diversimode operatur. Neq; in Nobis aliud sunt, quam diversi motus. Motus enim nihil generat præter motum. *Leviathan cap. 1.*

† See Four but Figure,) therefore in Us also the Perceptions Defenses of of these sensible Qualities are nothing but different a Letter to Motions. If then the Phantasm, that is, the Mr Dod. Image of the Object made in the Brain by Figure and Motion, be (as he says) the Sensation it self; is not Sensation, bare Figure and Motion? And are not all the forementioned Absurdities, unavoidable Consequences of his Opinion?

Mr Hobbs, (as I have elsewhere observed,) seems indeed not to have been altogether unaware of this insuperable Difficulty; But he industriously indeavours to conceal it from his Readers, and to impose upon them by the ambiguity of the Word *Phantasm*. Yet for a Reserve, in case he should be too hard pressed, * he gives us a Hint,

* Scio fuisse Philosophos quosdam, eisdemq; viros doctos, qui corpora omnia Sensu prædita esse sustinuerunt: Nec video, si natura Sensationis in reactione sola collocaretur, quomodo refutari possint. Sed et si ex reactione etiam corporum aliorum, phantasma aliquod nasceretur: illud tamen remoto objecto statim cessaret: Nam nisi ad retinendum Motum impressum, etiam remoto objecto, apta habeant Organa, ut habent Animalia; ita tantum sentient, ut nunquam sensisse se recordentur. — Sensationi ergo, cuæ vulgo ita appellatur, necessario adhæret memoria aliqua, &c. *Hobbs Phys. cap. 25. Sect. 5.*

For He himself expressly confesses, * that all Sensible Qualities, such as Colour, Sound, and the like, are in the Objects themselves nothing but Motion; And, because Motion can produce † Nothing but Motion, (as likewise 'tis evident that Figure and all its possible Compositions can produce nothing

that possibly Sensation may be something more, viz. a Power of Perception or Consciousness naturally and essentially inherent in all Matter; only that it wants the Organs and Memory of Animals

to express its Sensation: And † that, as a Man, if he were supposed to have no other Sense but Seeing, and That so ordered as that his Eyes were always immoveably fixed upon one and the same Object, and That also unchangeable and without any the least variety; such a Man could not properly be said to See, but only to be under an unintelligible kind of Amazement: So all unorganized Bodies may possibly have Sensation or Perception; but because for want of Organs there is no Variety in it, neither any Memory or means of expressing that Sensation, therefore

to Us it seems as if they had no such Thing at all.

This Opinion, I say, Mr Hobbs mentions as possible: But he does it with such Hesitancy, Diffidence and Sparingness, as shows plainly that he meant it only as a last Refuge, or rather Subterfuge, to recur to, when he should be pressed with the fore-mentioned Absurdities unavoidably consequent upon the Supposition of Sensation being only Figure and Motion. And indeed well might he be sparing, and, as it were, ashamed of this Subterfuge: For it is a Thing altogether as absurd, as even the other Opinion it self, of Thought being mere Motion: For what can be more ridiculous than to imagin that Matter is as essentially Conscious, as it is extended? Will it not follow from that Supposition, that every piece of Matter, being made up of endlessly divisible parts, (that is, of parts which

† Itaq; & Sensationi adhæret proprie dictæ, ut si aliqua insita sit perpetua phantasmatum varietas; ita ut aliud ab alio discerni possit. Si supponemus enim esse hominem, oculis quidem clavis, cæterisq; videndi Organis recte se habentibus compositum, nullo autem alio sensu præditum, eumq; ad eandem rem eodem semper colore & specie sine ulla vel minima varietate apparentem observatum esse; mihi certe, quicquid dicant alii, non Videre videretur. — Attonitum esse, & fortasse Aspectare eum, sed stupentem dicerem, videre non dicerem: Adeo Sentire semper idem, & Non Sentire, ad idem recidunt. Id. ibid.

are as really distinct Beings, notwithstanding their Contiguity, as if they had been at never so great a distance one from another,) is made up also of innumerable Consciousnesses and Infinite Confusion? But 'tis a shame to trouble the *Reader* with so much as the mention of any of the Numberless Absurdities following from that Monstrous Supposition. Others therefore, who would make Thinking to be an Affection of *Matter*, and yet are ashamed to use either of the forementioned ways, contend that *God* by his Almighty and Supreme Power indues certain Systems of *Matter* with a Faculty of Thinking, according to his own Good Pleasure. But this also amounts to Nothing. For (besides the Absurdity of supposing *God* to make an innumerable company of distinct Beings, such as the Particles of every System of *Matter* necessarily are, to be at the same time One Individual Conscious Being: Besides this, I say,) either our Idea of *Matter*, is a true and distinct Idea; or it is not. If it be a true and distinct Idea, (that is, if our Idea, not of the Substance of *Matter*; for of Simple Substance we have no Idea; but if our Idea of the Properties which essentially distinguish and denominate the Substance, be a right Idea,) that *Matter* is Nothing but a Solid Substance, capable only of Division, Figure and Motion, with all the possible Effects of their several Compositions; as to Us it appears to be, upon the Best Examination we are able to make of it; and the greatest part of our Adversaries themselves readily allow; then it is absolutely Impossible for Thinking to belong to *Matter*; because Thinking, as has been be-

fore

fore shown, cannot possibly arise from any *Modi-* Pag. 57.
fication or Composition of any or all of these and 97.
 Qualities: But if any Man will say that our
 Idea of *Matter* is wrong; and that by *Matter*
 he will not here mean, as in all other cases,
 a Solid Substance, capable only of Division
 Figure and Motion, with all the possible
 Effects of their several Compositions; but
Substance in general, capable of Thinking and
 of numberless unknown Properties besides;
 then he trifles only, in putting an ambiguous
 Signification upon the Word *Matter*, where he
 ought to use the word *Substance*. And, in
That Sense, to suppose Thinking or any other
 Active Property possible to be in *Matter*, as
 signifying only *Substance in general*, of whose
 Powers and Capacities we have no certain
 Idea; would make Nothing at all to the Pre-
 sent Purpose in our Adversaries Advantage,
 and is at least *Not a clearer and more Intelligible*
 way of Talking, than to attribute the same
 Properties to an *Immaterial Substance*, and
 keep the Idea of *Matter* and its Properties
 clear and distinct. For I affirm,

3dly. That even supposing (in these Mens *That if*
 confused way) that the Soul was really not a *Thinking*
 distinct Substance from Body, but that *and Wil-*
 Thinking and Willing could be and were indeed *ling were*
 only Qualities or Affections of *Matter*; yet *Qualities*
 even *This* would not at all affect the present *of Matter,*
 Question about *Liberty*, nor prove Freedom *yet never-*
 of Will to be an impossible Thing. For, *theless Li-*
 since it has been already demonstrated, that *erty might,*
 Thinking and Willing cannot possibly be Ef- *be possible.*
 fects or Compositions of Figure and Motion; Pag. 55. 57.
 Whosoever will make Thinking and Willing and 97.
 to be Qualities or Affections of *Matter*, must

suppose *Matter* capable of certain Properties entirely different from Figure and Motion: And if it be capable of Properties entirely different from Figure and Motion, then it can never be proved from the Effects of Figure and Motion being all Necessary, that the Effects of other and totally distinct Properties must likewise be Necessary.

A shameful
Fallacy of
Mr Hobbs
and his
Followers.

Mr *Hobbs* therefore, and his Followers, are guilty of a most shameful Fallacy in that very Argument, wherein they place their main and chief strength. For, supposing *Matter* to be capable of Thinking and Willing, they contend that the Soul is mere *Matter*; and knowing that the Effects of Figure and Motion must needs be all necessary, they conclude that the Operations of the Mind must All therefore be Necessary: That is; When they would prove the Soul to be mere *Matter*; then they suppose *Matter* capable, not only of Figure and Motion, but also of other unknown Properties: And when they would prove the Will, and all other Operations of the Soul, to be Necessary; then they devest *Matter* again of all its Unknown Properties, and make it mere Solidity, endued only with Figure and Motion, again. Wherefore, distinguishing their ambiguous and confused use of the Word *Matter*, they are unavoidably reduced to one of these two Concessions. If by *Matter*, they mean a Solid Substance endued only with Figure and Motion, and all the possible Effects of the Variations and Compositions of these Qualities; then the Soul cannot be mere *Matter*; because (as Mr *Hobbs* himself * confesses) Figure and Motion can never produce any thing but Figure and Motion; and consequently (as hath been * before demonstrated) they can never

* *Motus nihil generat præter Motum.* Levith. Cap. I
* pag. 57.
& 97.

pro-

produce so much as any Secondary Quality, [Sound, Colour and the like,] much less Thinking and Reasoning: From whence it follows, that the Soul being unavoidably something Immaterial, they have no Argument left to prove that it cannot have a *Power of Beginning Motion*, which is a plain Instance of *Liberty*. But if, on the other Hand, they will by *Matter* mean *Substance in general*, capable of unknown Properties, totally different from Figure and Motion; then they must no longer argue against the Possibility of *Liberty*, from the Effects of Figure and Motion being all unavoidably Necessary; because Liberty will not consist in the Effects of Figure and Motion, but in those Other Unknown Properties of Matter, which these Men can no more explain or argue about, than about Immaterial Substances. The Truth therefore is; they must needs suppose Thinking to be merely an Effect or Composition of Figure and Motion, if they will give any strength to their Arguments against Liberty; and then the Question will be, not whether God can make *Matter* think, or no; (for in that Question they only trifle with a Word, abusing the Word *Matter* to signify *Substance in general*;) but the Question is, whether *Figure and Motion*, in any Composition or Division, can possibly Be *Perception and Thought*: Which (as has been before said) is just such a Question, as if a Man should ask, whether it be possible that a *Triangle* should be a *Sound*, or a *Globe* a *Colour*. The Sum is this: If the Soul be an *Immaterial Substance*, (as it must needs be, if we have any true Idea of the Nature and Properties of *Matter*;) then Mr *Hobbs's* Arguments against the Possibility

sibility of *Liberty*, drawn all from the Properties of *Matter*, are vain and nothing to the Purpose. But if our Adversaries will be so absurd as to contend, that the Soul is nothing but mere *Matter*; Then either by *Matter* they must understand *Substance* in general, Substance indued with unknown Powers, with *Active* as well as *Passive* Properties; which is confounding and taking away our Idea of *Matter*, and at the same Time destroying all their own Arguments against *Liberty*, which they have founded wholly on the known Properties of *Matter*; Or else they must speak out, (as they really mean,) that Thinking and Willing are nothing but Effects and Compositions of Figure and Motion; which I have already shown to be a Contradiction in Terms.

pag. 55, 57,
& 97.

There are some other Arguments against the Possibility of *Liberty*, which Men by attempting to answer, have made to appear considerable; when in reality they are altogether beside the Question. As for Instance, those drawn from the *Necessity of the Will's being determined by the last Judgment of the Understanding*; And from the *Certainty of the Divine Prescience*.

of the Will
being neces-
sarily de-
termined by
the last
Judgment
of the Un-
derstand-
ing.

As to the former, viz: *The Necessity of the Will's being determined by the last Judgment of the Understanding*: This is only a Necessity upon Supposition; that is to say, a Necessity that a Man should *Will* a Thing, when it is supposed that he *does Will* it; just as if one should affirm, that every thing which *Is*, is therefore Necessary to *Be*, because, when it *Is*, it cannot but *Be*. For the last Judgment of
the

the Understanding, is nothing else but a Man's final Determining, (after more or less Consideration,) either to Choose or not to Choose a thing; that is, it is the very same with the *Act of Volition*. Or else, if the *Act of Volition* be distinguished from the *last Judgment of the Understanding*: then the *Act of Volition*, or rather the *Beginning of Action*, consequent upon the *last judgment of the Understanding*, is not determined or caused by That last judgment, as by the *physical Efficient*, but only as the *Moral Motive*. For the true, proper, immediate, *physical efficient Cause* of Action, is the *Power of Self-motion* which is in Men, and which exerts itself freely in consequence of the *last judgment of the Understanding*. But the *last judgment of the Understanding*, is not itself a *physical Efficient*, but merely a *Moral Motive*, upon which the *physical Efficient* or *motive Power* begins to Act. The *Necessity* therefore, by which the *Power of Acting* follows the *judgment of the Understanding*, is only a *Moral Necessity*, that is, *no Necessity at all*, in the Sense the Opposers of Liberty understand *Necessity*. For *Moral Necessity*, is evidently consistent with the most perfect *Natural Liberty*. For instance: A Man intirely free from all Pain of Body and Disorder of Mind, judges it unreasonable for him to Hurt or Destroy Himself; and, being under no Temptation or External Violence, he *cannot possibly* Act contrary to this Judgment; not because he wants a *Natural* or *Physical Power* so to do, but because it is absurd and mischievous, and *morally impossible* for him to Choose to do it. Which also is the very same Reason, why the most perfect rational Creatures, superiour to Men,

cannot

cannot do Evil; not because they want a *Natural Power* to perform the Material Action; but because it is *morally impossible*, that with a perfect Knowledge of what is Best, and without any Temptation to Evil, their Will should determine it self to Choose to Act Foolishly and unreasonably. Here therefore seems at last truly to lie the Fundamental Error both of those who oppose and argue against the *Liberty of the Will*, and of those who but too confusedly defend it: They do not make a clear distinction between *moral Motives* and *Causes Physically Efficient*; which Two things, have no similitude at all. Lastly, if the Maintainers of Fate shall allege, that after all, they think a Man free from all Pain of Body and Disorder of Mind, is under not only a *Moral* but also a *Natural* Impossibility of hurting or destroying himself; because neither his *Judgment* nor his *Will*, without some impulse *External* to both, can any more possibly be determined to any Action, than one Body can begin to move, without being impelled by another: I answer; This is forsaking the Argument drawn from the Necessity of the *Will's* following the *Understanding*, and recurs to the former Argument of the absolute Impossibility of there being any where a *first Principle of Motion* at all; which has been abundantly answered * already.

* pag. 87.

The Certainty of Divine

Fore-knowledge not inconsistent with the

Liberty of Mens Actions.

The other Argument which I said has also frequently been urged against the Possibility of *Liberty*, is the *certainty of the Divine Providence*. But this also is entirely beside the Question. For if there be no Other Arguments, by which it can be proved antecedently, that All Actions are *Necessary*, 'tis certain

certain it can never be made to appear to follow from *Præscience* alone, that they must be so. That is; if upon *Other Accounts* there be no *Impossibility*, but that the Actions of Men may be free; the bare *Certainty of the Divine Fore-knowledge*, can never be proved to destroy that Freedom, or make Any Alteration in the Nature of Mens Actions: And consequently the certainty of *Præscience*, separated from *Other Arguments*, is altogether beside the Question concerning *Liberty*. As to the *Other Arguments*, usually intermingled with this Question; they have all, I think, been answered already. And now that, if upon other Accounts there be no *Impossibility* for the Actions of Men to be free, the bare certainty of the *Divine Fore-knowledge* can never be proved to destroy that Freedom; is very Evident. For bare *Fore-knowledge*, has no Influence at all in any Respect; nor affects in any measure the manner of the Existence of any Thing. All that the greatest Opposers of *Liberty* have ever urged, or can urge, upon this Head, amounts only to This; that *Fore-knowledge* implies *Certainty*, and *Certainty* implies *Necessity*. But neither is it true, that *Certainty* implies *Necessity*; neither does *Fore-knowledge* imply any other *Certainty*, than such a *Certainty* only as would be equally in Things, though there was no *Fore-knowledge*.

For (1st.) the certainty of *Fore-knowledge* does not Cause the certainty of Things, but is it self founded on the reality of their Existence. Whatever now Is, 'tis certain that it Is; and it was yesterday and from Eternity as certainly true, that the Thing would be to day, as it is now certain that it Is. And this certainty of Event is equally the same, whether

whether it be supposed that the Thing could be Fore-known, or not. For whatever at any time *Is*; it was *certainly true* from Eternity, as to the Event, that That Thing *would be*: And this certain Truth of every future Event, would not at all have been the less, though there had been no such Thing as Fore-knowledge. Bare Præscience therefore has no Influence at all upon any Thing; nor contributes in the least towards the making it Necessary. We may illustrate this in some measure by the Comparison of our own Knowledge. We know certainly that some Things are; and when we know that they are, they cannot but Be: Yet 'tis manifest our Knowledge does not at all affect the Things, to make them more Necessary or more Certain. Now Fore-knowledge in God, is the very same as Knowledge. All things are to Him as if they were equally present, to all the Purposes of Knowledge and Power. He knows perfectly every thing that *Is*: And he Fore-knows whatever shall be, in the same Manner as he knows what *Is*. As therefore Knowledge has no Influence on Things that *are*; so neither has Fore-knowledge, on Things that *shall be*. 'Tis true; The *Manner* how God can foresee Future Things, without a Chain of Necessary Causes; is impossible for us to explain *distinctly*. Tho' some sort of *general* Notion, we may conceive of it. For as a *Man* who has no Influence over another Person's Actions, can yet often perceive before-hand what That Other will do; and a *Wiser* and more experienced Man, will still with *greater probability* foresee what Another, whose Disposition

tion he is perfectly acquainted with, will in certain Circumstances do; and an *Angel*, with still much *Less degrees of Errour*, may have a Further Prospect into Mens future Actions: So it is very reasonable to apprehend, that *God*, without influencing Mens Wills by his Power, yet by his Foresight cannot but have as much *Certainer* a knowledge of future Free Events, than either Men or Angels can possibly have; as the *Perfection* of *His* Nature is greater than that of *Theirs*. The *Distinct Manner* how he foresees these things, is indeed *impossible* for *Us* to explain. But so also are Numberless other Things, which yet no Man doubts of the Truth of. And if there were any Strength in This Argument; it would prove, not against *Liberty*, but against *Præscience* it self. For if these two things were *really inconsistent*, and one of them must be destroyed; the introducing an absolute and universal Fatality, which evidently destroys all Religion and Morality, would tend more of the two to the Dishonour of God, than denying him a Fore-knowledge, which upon this Supposition would be impossible and imply a Contradiction to conceive him to have; and the denying of which, would in such case be no more a Diminution of his *Omniscience*, than the denying him the Power of working Contradictions, is taking away his *Omnipotence*. But the Case is not thus. For tho' we cannot indeed clearly and distinctly explain the *Manner* of God's foreseeing the Actions of Free-Agents; yet thus much we know, that the bare Fore-knowledge of any Action that would upon all other Accounts be Free, cannot

pag. 74.

not alter or diminish that Freedom; it being evident, that Fore-knowledge adds no other Certainty to any thing, than what it would equally have though there was no Fore-knowledge. Unless therefore we be antecedently certain, that nothing can possibly be free; and that Liberty is in it self absolutely an Inconsistent and Contradictory Notion, (as I have above shown that it is not;) bare Fore-knowledge, which makes no alteration at all in any thing, will not be in any ways Inconsistent with Liberty; how great Difficulty so ever there may be, in comprehending the manner of such Fore-knowledge. For if Liberty be in it self possible; The bare *Fore-sight* of a free Action, *before it be done*; is nothing different (to any purpose in the present Question,) from a simple *Knowledge* of it, *when it is done*: Both these kinds of Knowledge, implying plainly a *Certainty only* of the Event, (which would be the same tho' there was no such Knowledge,) and not at all any *Necessity* of the Thing.

For (2dly,) As *Fore-knowledge* implies not any other Certainty, than such as would be equally in Things, though there was no *Fore-knowledge*: So neither does this *certainty of Event*, in any sort imply *Necessity*. For, let a Fatalist suppose, (what he does not yet grant,) that there was in Man (as we assert) a Power of beginning Motion, that is, of acting freely; and let him suppose further, if he please, that those Actions could not possibly be Fore-known: Will there not yet, notwithstanding this Supposition, be in the Nature of things the same *certainty of Event* in every

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one of the Man's Actions, as if they were never so Fatal and necessary? For instance: Suppose the Man by an internal Principle of Motion, and an absolute Freedom of Will, without any External Cause or Impulse at all, does some particular Action to *Day*; and suppose it was not possible that this Action should have been foreseen *Yesterday*; was there not nevertheless the same *certainty of Event*, as if it had been fore-seen? That is; would it not, notwithstanding the *supposed* Freedom, have been as *certain a Truth* Yesterday and from Eternity, that this Action *was* in Event to be performed to *Day*, (though supposed never so impossible to have been Fore-known,) as it is now a *Certain and infallible Truth* that it is performed? Mere *certainty of Event* therefore, does not in any measure imply *Necessity*: And consequently *Fore-knowledge*, however difficult to be explained as to the *Manner* of it, yet since 'tis evident it implies no other Certainty, but only That certainty of Event which the Thing would equally have without being Fore-known, 'tis evident that *It* also implies no *Necessity*.

And now having, as I hope, sufficiently *Of the Ori-*
proved both the Possibility and the real Ex-*ginal of*
istence of *Liberty*: I shall, from what has *Evil.*
been said on this Head, draw only this one
Inference; that hereby we are inabled to
answer that Antient and Great Question,
[Πότεν τὸ κακόν;] What is the Cause and O-
riginal of *Evil*. For Liberty implying a
Natural Power of doing Evil, as well as
Good; and the imperfect Nature of Finite
Beings,

A Demonstration of the

Beings, making it possible for them to abuse That their Liberty to an actual Commission of Evil; and it being Necessary to the Order and Beauty of the Whole, and for displaying the Infinite Wisdom of the Creator, that there should be different and various degrees of Creatures, whereof consequently some must be *less Perfect* than others; Hence there necessarily arises a Possibility of Evil, notwithstanding that the Creator is infinitely Good. In short, thus: All that we call *Evil*, is either an *Evil of Imperfection*, as the *Want of certain Faculties and Excellencies which other Creatures have*; or *Natural Evil*, as *Pain, Death*, and the like; or *Moral Evil*, as all kinds of *Vice*. The *First* of these, is not properly an Evil: For every Power, Faculty or Perfection, which any Creature enjoys, being the Free Gift of God, which he was no more obliged to bestow, than he was to confer Being or Existence it self; 'tis plain, the want of any certain Faculty or Perfection in any kind of Creatures, which never belonged to their Nature, is no more an Evil to them, than there never having been Created or brought into Being at all, could properly have been called an Evil. The *Second* kind of Evil, which we call *Natural Evil*, is either a Necessary Consequence of the former; as *Death*, to a Creature on whose Nature Immortality was never conferred; and then 'tis no more properly an Evil, than the Former: Or else it is counterpoised in the whole, with as great or greater Good; as the *Afflictions and Sufferings of Good Men*; and then also it is not properly an Evil: Or else lastly 'tis a *Punishment*; and then 'tis a Necessary

cessary Consequent of the *Third* and last sort of Evil, viz. *Moral Evil*: And *This* arises wholly from the abuse of *Liberty*; which God gave to his Creatures for other Purposes, and which 'twas reasonable and fit to give them for the Perfection and Order of the whole Creation; Only they, contrary to God's Intention and Command, have abused what was Necessary for the Perfection of the whole, to the Corruption and Depravation of themselves: And thus all sorts of Evils have entred into the World, without any Diminution to the Infinite Goodness of the Creator and Governour thereof.

IX. *The Supreme Cause and Author of all Things, must of Necessity be infinitely Wise.* ^{That the Supreme Cause and Author of all Things, must of Necessity be infinitely Wise,} This Proposition is evidently Consequent upon those that have already been proved; And they being established, This, as admitting no further Dispute, needs not to be largely insisted upon. For nothing is more evident, than that an *Infinite, Omnipresent, Intelligent Being*, must know perfectly all Things that are; and that He who alone is *Self-Existent and Eternal, the sole Cause and Author of all Things*; from whom alone all the Powers of all Things are derived, and on whom they continually depend; must also know perfectly all the Consequences of those Powers, that is, all Possibilities of Things to come, and what in every respect is Best and Wisest to be done; and having infinite Power, can never be controuled or prevented from doing what he so knows to be Fittest. From all which, it manifestly follows, that every Effect of the Supreme Cause,

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must

must be the Product of Infinite Wisdom, More particularly: The Supreme Being, because he is *Infinite*, must be every where present: And because he is an Infinite *Mind* or *Intelligence*; therefore where-ever he Is, his Knowledge Is, which is inseparable from his Being, and must therefore be infinite likewise: And where-ever his Infinite Knowledge is, it must necessarily have a *full and perfect* Prospect of all things, and nothing can be concealed from its Inspection: He includes and surrounds every thing with his boundless Presence; and penetrates every part of their Substance with his All-seeing Eye: So that the inmost Nature and Essence of all things, are Perfectly Naked and Open to his View; and even the deepest Thoughts of Intelligent Beings themselves, manifest in his sight. Further, All Things being not only present to him, but also entirely *Depending* upon him, and having *received* both their Being it self, and all their Powers and Faculties *from Him*; 'tis manifest that, as he knows all things that *are*, so he must likewise know all Possibilities of Things, that is, all Effects that *Can be*. For, being himself only Self-Existent, and having Alone *given* to all Things all the Powers and Faculties they are indued with; 'tis evident He must of Necessity know perfectly what All and Each of those Powers and Faculties, which are *derived wholly from himself*, can possibly Produce: And Seeing at one boundless View, all the possible Compositions and Divisions, Variations and Changes, Circumstances and Depend-

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Being and Attributes of God.

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pendencies of Things; all their possible Relations one to another, and Dispositions or Fitnesses to certain and respective Ends; he must without Possibility of Error, know exactly what is Best and Properest in every one of the Infinite Possible Cases or Methods of Disposing Things; and understand perfectly how to Order and Direct the respective Means, to bring about what he so knows to be in its Kind, or in the Whole, the Best and Fittest in the End. This is what we mean by *Infinite Wisdom*. And having before shown, (which indeed is also evident of it self,) that the Supreme Cause is moreover *All-Powerful*; so that He can no more be prevented by Force or Opposition, than he can be hindered by Error or Mistake, from *Effecting* always what is absolutely Fittest and Wisest to be done; It follows undeniably, that he is *actually and effectually*, in the highest and most complete sense, *Ininitely Wise*; and that the World, and all Things therein, must be and are Effects of Infinite Wisdom. This is Demonstration *a priori*. The Proof *a posteriori*, of the Infinite Wisdom of God, from the Consideration of the Exquisite Perfection and Consummate Excellency of his Works; is no less strong and undeniable; But I shall not enlarge upon this Argument; because it has often already been accurately and strongly urged, to the everlasting Shame and Confusion of Atheists, by the ablest and learnedest Writers both of Anti-

See Galen
de Usu Par-
tium, Tully
de natura Deorum, Boyle of Final Causes, Mr Ray of the Wisdom of God
in the Creation, Mr Derhams Physico Theology; &c.

Opinio-
num Com-
menta de-
let dies, na-
turæ judi-
cia confir-
mat. Cicero.

ent and Modern Times. I shall here ob-
serve only this One Thing; That the older
the World grows, and the deeper Men in-
quire into Things, and the more Accurate
Observations they make, and the more and
greater Discoveries they find out; the stron-
ger this Argument continually grows: Which
is a certain Evidence of its being found-
ed in Truth. If *Galen* so many Ages ago,
could find in the Construction and Con-
stitution of the parts of a Humane Body,
such undeniable marks of Contrivance
and Design, as forced him *Then* to acknow-
ledge and admire the Wisdom of its Au-
thor; What would he have said, if he
had known the *Late* Discoveries in Anato-
my and Physick, the Circulation of the
Blood, the exact Structure of the Heart and
Brain, the Uses of Numberless Glands and
Valves for the Secretion and Motion of the
Juices in the Body, besides several Veins
and other Vessels and Receptacles not at all
known, or so much as imagined to have
any Existence, *in his Days*; but which *Now*
are discovered to serve the wisest and most
exquisite Ends imaginable? If the Argu-
ments against the Belief of the Being of an
All-wise Creator and Governour of the
World, which *Epicurus* and his Followers
Lucretius drew from the Faults which they
imagined they could find in the Frame and
Constitution of the *Earth*, were so Poor
and Inconsiderable, that even in that Infan-
cy of Natural Philosophy, the generality of
Men contemned and despised them as of
no force; How would they have been asha-
med,

med, if they had lived in these Days, when those very things, which they thought to be Faults and Blunders in the Constitution of Nature, are discovered to be very useful and of exceeding Benefit to the Preservation and Well-Being of the whole? And, to mention no more: If Tully, from the partial and very imperfect Knowledge in Astronomy, which His Times afforded, could be so confident of the Heavenly Bodies being Disposed and Moved by a Wise and Understanding Mind, as to declare, that in his Opinion, whoever asserted the contrary, was himself * void of all Understanding; What wou'd He have said, if he had known the *Modern Discoveries* in Astronomy? The *Immense Greatness* of the World; (I mean of that Part of it, which falls under our Observation;) which is now known to be as much greater than what in his Time they imagined it to be, as the World it self, according to their System, was greater than *Archimedes's Sphere*? The *Exquisite Regularity* of all the Planets Motions, without Epicycles, Stations, Retrogradations, or any other Deviation or Confusion whatsoever? The *inexpressible Nicety* of the Adjustment of the Primary Velocity and Original Direction of the *Annual Motion* of the Planets, with their distance from the Central Body and their force of Gravitation towards it? The *wonderful Proportion* of the *Diurnal Motion* of the Earth and other Planets about

* Cælestem ergo admirabilem ordinem incredibilemque constantiam, ex qua conservatio & salus omnium omnis oritur, qui vacare mente putat, is ipse mentis expers habendus est. *De Natura Deorum, lib. 2.*

their own Centers, for the Distinction of Light and Darknels; without that monstrously disproportionate Whirling of the whole Heavens, which the Antient Astronomers were forced to suppose? The exact

* *Planetarum densitates fere sunt, ut radices diametrorum apparentium applicatz ad diametros veras, hoc est, reciproce ut distantiz Planetarum a sole, ductz in radices diametrorum apparentium. Collocavit igitur Deus Planetas in diversis distantiiis a Sole, ut quilibet pro gradu densitatis, calore Solis majori vel minore fruatur. Newton. Princip. Lib. 3. Prop. 8.*

Accommodating the * *Densities* of the Planets, to their distances from the Sun, and consequently to the Proportion of Heat which each of them is to bear respectively; so that neither those which are nearest to the Sun, are destroyed by the Heat; nor those which are farthest off, by the Cold; but each one enjoys a Temperature suited to its proper Uses, as the

Earth is to ours? The *Admirable Order, Number and Usefulness*, of the several *Moons*, (as I may very properly call them,) never dreamt of by Antiquity, but now by the Help of Telescopes *clearly and distinctly seen* to move about their respective Planets; and whose Motions are so exactly known, that their very Eclipses are as certainly calculated and foretold, as those of our own Moon? The *strange Adjustment* of Our Moon's *Motion about its own Center* once in a Month, with its Motion about the Earth in the same Period of Time, to such a degree of Exactness, that *by that means* the same Face is always obverted to the Earth without any sensible Variation? Lastly, the Motions of the *Comets*, which are Now known to be as exact, regular, and periodical, as the Moti-

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ons of Other Planets? What, I say, would Tully, that great Master of Reason, have thought and said; if these and other newly discovered Instances of the Unexpressible Accuracy and Wisdom of the Works of God, had been found out and known in *His* Time? Certainly Atheism, which *Then* was altogether unable to withstand the Arguments drawn from this Topick; must *now*, upon the additional Strength of these later Observations, which are every one an unanswerable Proof of the incomprehensible Wisdom of the Creator, be utterly ashamed to show its Head. We *Now* see with how great reason the Author of the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*, after he had described the Beauty of the Sun and Stars, and all the then visible Works of God in Heaven and Earth; concluded, *ch. 43, v. 32*, (as *We* after all the Discoveries of later Ages, may no doubt still truly say,) *There are yet hid greater things than these, and we have seen but a few of his Works.*

XII. Lastly, *The Supreme Cause and Au-^{thor} of all Things, must of Necessity be a Being of Infinite Goodness, Justice and Truth, and all other Moral Perfections; such as Become the Supreme Governour and Judge of the World.* That there are different Relations of Things one towards another, is as certain as that there are Different Things in the World. That from these Different Relations of Different Things, there necessarily arises an Agreement or Disagreement of some Things to others, or a Fitness or Unfitness of the Ap-
plication

plication of Different Things or Different Relations one to another; is likewise as certain, as that there is any Difference in the Nature of Things, or that Different Things do Exist. Further, that there is a *Fitness* or *Suitableness* of certain *Circumstances* to certain *Persons*, and an *Unsuitableness* of Others, Founded in the *Nature of Things* and the *Qualifications of Persons*, antecedent to *Will* and to all *Arbitrary* or *Positive Appointment whatsoever*; must unavoidably be acknowledged by every one, who will not affirm that tis equally *Fit and Suitable*, in the *Nature and Reason of things*, that an Innocent Being should be *extremely and eternally Miserable*, as that it should be Free from such Misery. There is therefore such a Thing as *Fitness* and *Unfitness*, eternally, necessarily and unchangeably, in the *Nature and Reason of Things*. Now what these *Relations of Things* absolutely and necessarily *Are* in Themselves; That also they *Appear to be*, to the Understanding of all Intelligent Beings; except Those only, who understand Things to Be what they are not, that is, whose Understandings are either very imperfect or very much depraved. And by this *Understanding* or *Knowledge* of the *Natural and Necessary Relations of Things*, the *Actions likewise* of all Intelligent Beings are constantly Directed; (which by *the by* is the true Ground and Foundation of all Morality :) unless their *Will* be corrupted by particular *Interest* or *Affection*, or swayed by some unreasonable and prevailing Lust. The Supreme Cause therefore, and Author of all Things; since (as

has

has already been proved) he must of Necessity have Infinite Knowledge, and the Perfection of Wisdom; so that 'tis absolutely impossible he should Err or be in any respect Ignorant of the True Relations and Fitness or Unfitness of Things, or be by any means Deceived or imposed upon herein: And since he is likewise Self-Existent, Absolutely Independent and All-Powerful; so that, having no want of any thing, 'tis impossible his Will should be influenced by any wrong Affection; and having no Dependence, 'tis impossible his Power should be limited by any Superior Strength; 'Tis evident He must of Necessity, (meaning, not a Necessity of Fate, but such a Moral Necessity as I before said was consistent with the most perfect Liberty,) Do always what he Knows to be Fittest to be done; that is, He must Act always according to the strictest Rules of Infinite Goodness, Justice and Truth, and all other Moral Perfections. In Particular: The Supreme Cause must in the first place be Infinitely Good; that is, he must have an unalterable Disposition to Do and to Communicate Good or Happiness; Because being Himself necessarily Happy in the Eternal injoyment of his own infinite Perfections, he cannot possibly have any other Motives to make any Creatures at all, but only that He may communicate to Them His Own Perfections; according to their different Capacities, arising from that Variety of Natures, which it was Fit for Infinite Wisdom to produce; and according to their different Improvements, arising from that

pag. 105.

that *Liberty*, which is essentially Necessary to the Constitution of *Intelligent and Active Beings*. That he must be Infinitely Good, appears likewise further from hence; that being necessarily *All-Sufficient*, he must consequently be infinitely removed from all *Malice* and *Envy*, and from all other Possible Causes or Temptations of doing Evil; which, it is evident, can only be Effects of *Want* and *Weakness*, of *Imperfection* or *Depravation*. Again; The Supreme Cause and Author of all things, must in like manner be infinitely *Just*; Because the *Rule of Equity* being nothing else but the *Very Nature* of Things, and their *necessary Relations* one to Another; and the *Execution of Justice*, being nothing else but a suiting the *Circumstances of Things* to the *Qualifications of Persons*, according to the *Original Fitness and Agreeableness*, which I have before shown to be *Necessarily in Nature*, antecedent to *Will* and all *Positive Appointment*; 'tis evident that He who *knows Perfectly* this Rule of Equity, and necessarily *Judges of Things as they are*; who has compleat Power to Execute Justice according to that Knowledge, and *No possible Temptation* to deviate in the least therefrom; who can neither be *imposed upon* by any *Deceit*, nor *swayed* by any *Byass*, nor *awed* by any *Power*; must of necessity do always that which is *Right*; without *Iniquity*, and without *Partiality*; without *Prejudice*, and without *Respect of Persons*. Lastly; That the Supreme Cause and Author of all things, must be *True and Faithful*, in all his *Declarations*

tions and all his Promises; is most evident :
For the only Possible Reason of Falsifying,
is either Rashness or Forgetfulness, Inconstancy
or Impotency, Fear of Evil or Hope of Gain ;
From * all which, an Infi-
nitely Wise, All sufficient and
Good Being, must of Ne-
cessity be infinitely remov-
ed; and consequently, as
it is impossible for him
to be deceived himself, so *
neither is it possible for him
in any wise to deceive O-
thers. In a Word: All

Evil and all Imperfections whatsoever, a-
rise plainly either from Shortness of Under-
standing, Defect of Power, or Faultiness of
Will; and this last, evidently from some
Impotency, Corruption or Depravation; being
nothing else but a direct Choosing to Act
contrary to the known Reason and Nature
of Things: From all which, it being ma-
nifest that the Supreme Cause and Author
of all Things, cannot but be infinitely Re-
moved; it follows undeniably, that he
must of Necessity be a Being of Infinite Good-
ness, Justice and Truth, and all other Moral
Perfections.

To this Argumentation *a priori*, there
can be opposed but one Objection that I
know of, drawn on the contrary *a posteri-
ori*, from Experience and Observation of
the Unequal Distributions of Providence in
the World. But (besides the just Vindica-
tion of the Wisdom and Goodness of Pro-
vidence in its Dispensations even with Re-
spect

** 'Οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ ἰσότης ἐν
τοῖς ψυδαίτοι. — Κομμοῖ
ἀρα ὁ θεός ἀπὸ τῆς καὶ ἀλη-
θείας ἐν τῇ ἐργῇ καὶ ἐν λόγῳ.
καὶ ἔτι αὐτὸς μετρίσεται, ὅτε
ἄλλος ἐξαπατᾷ, ἢ τῇ κατὰ
φαντασίᾳ, ἢ τῇ κατὰ λόγον,
ἢ τῇ κατὰ σημείων ποιήσει,
ἢ ὅτι ὁ πᾶς ἐστὶ ὄναρ. Plato
de Repub. Lib. 2. sub finem.

spect to this *present* World only, which *Plutarch* and other Heathen Writers have judiciously made,) the Objection it self is entirely wide of the Question. For concerning the Justice and Goodness of God, (as of any Governour whatsoever,) no Judgment is to be made from a partial View of a few small Portions of his Dispensations, but from an entire Consideration of the Whole; and consequently not only the short Duration of this present State, but moreover all that is past and that is still to come, must be taken into the Account: and Then every thing will clearly appear just and right.

From this Account of the Moral Attributes of God, it follows,

The Necessity of Gods Moral Attributes, consistent with perfect Liberty.

* pag. 150.

pag. 64.

1st. That though All the Actions of God, are entirely Free; and consequently the Exercise of his Moral Attributes cannot be said to be Necessary, in the same Sense of Necessity as his Existence and Eternity are Necessary; yet these Moral Attributes are really and truly Necessary, by such a Necessity, as, though it be * not at all inconsistent with Liberty, yet is equally Certain, Infallible, and to be depended upon, as even the Existence it self, or the Eternity of God. For though nothing is more Certain (*as has been already proved in the Ninth Proposition of this Discourse*) than that God acts, *not necessarily, but voluntarily*, with particular intention and design, knowing that he does Good, and intending to do so, freely and out of choice, and when

when he has no other constraint upon him but this, that his Goodness inclines his Will to communicate himself and to do Good ; so that the Divine Nature is under no Necessity, but such as is consistent with the most perfect Liberty and Freest Choice : (which is the Ground of all our Prayers and Thanksgivings ; the Reason, why we *pray* to him to be *good* to us and *gracious*, and *thank* him for being *just* and *merciful* ; whereas no Man *prays* to him to be *Omni-present*, or *thanks* him for being *Omnipotent*, or for *knowing all things* ;) Though nothing, I say, is more certain, than that God acts, not *necessarily*, but *voluntarily* ; yet it is nevertheless as *truly and absolutely impossible* for God not to do (or to do any thing contrary to) what his Moral Attributes require him to do ; as if he was really, not a Free, but a Necessary Agent. And the Reason hereof, is plain : Because Infinite Knowledge, Power and Goodness in Conjunction, may, notwithstanding the most perfect Freedom and Choice, act with altogether as much *Certainty and Unalterable Steadiness* ; as even the Necessity of Fate can be supposed to do. Nay they cannot possibly but so act ; because Free Choice, in a Being of Infinite Knowledge, Power and Goodness, can no more choose to act contrary to these Perfections ; than *Knowledge* can be *Ignorance*, *Power* be *Weakness*, or *Goodness* *Malice* : So that *Free Choice*, in such a Being, may be as *Certain and Steady* a Principle of Action, as the Necessity of Fate. We may therefore as certainly and infallibly rely upon

upon the *Moral*, as upon the *Natural* Attributes of God: It being as absolutely impossible for Him to Act contrary to the One, as to Devest himself of the Other; And as much a Contradiction, to suppose him Choosing to Do any thing inconsistent with his Justice, Goodness and Truth; as to suppose him devested of Infinity, Power or Existence. The One is contrary, to the *Immediate and Absolute Necessity of his Nature*; The other, to the unalterable *Rectitude of his Will*: The One, is in it self an *Immediate Contradiction in the Terms*; The Other, is an *express Contradiction to the Necessary Perfections of the Divine Nature*. To suppose the One, is saying absolutely that *Something Is at the same Time that it is not*: To suppose the Other, is saying that *Infinite Knowledge can Act Ignorantly, Infinite Power Weakly, or that Infinite Wisdom and Goodness can do Things Not Good or Wise to be done*: All which, are equally Great, and equally *Manifest Absurdities*. This, I humbly conceive, is a very Intelligible Account of the Moral Attributes of God; satisfactory to the Mind, and without Perplexity and Confusion of Ideas. I might have said it at once, (as the Truth most certainly is,) that Justice, Goodness, and all the other Moral Attributes of God, are as *Essential* to the Divine Nature, as the Natural Attributes of Eternity, Infinity, and the like. But because all Atheistical Persons, after they are fully convinced that there must needs be in the Universe some one Eternal, Necessary, Infinite and All-powerful

ful Being; will still with unreasonable Obstinacy contend, that they can by no means see any necessary Connexion of Goodness, Justice, or any other Moral Attribute, with these Natural Perfections; Therefore I chole to endeavour to demonstrate the Moral Attributes by a particular deduction, in the manner I have now done.

2dly. From hence it follows, that though God is a most perfectly free Agent, yet he cannot but do always what is Best and Wisest in the whole. The Reason is evident; Because Perfect Wisdom and Goodness, are as *Steady and Certain* Principles of Action, as Necessity it self: And an Infinitely Wise and Good Being, indued with the most perfect Liberty, can no more choose to act in Contradiction to Wisdom and Goodness; than a Necessary Agent can Act contrary to the Necessity, by which it is acted: It being as great an Absurdity and Impossibility in Choice, for Infinite Wisdom to choose to act Unwisely, or Infinite Goodness to choose what is not Good; as it is in Nature for absolute Necessity to fail of producing its necessary Effect. There was indeed no Necessity in Nature, that God should at first Create such Beings as he has Created, or indeed any Beings at all; because He is in Himself infinitely Happy, and All-sufficient: There was also no Necessity in Nature that he should preserve and continue Things in Being, after they were created; because He would be as Self-sufficient without their Continuance, as he was before their Creation: But it was Fit, and Wise, and Good, that Infinite Wisdom

dom should manifest, and Infinite Goodness communicate it self; And therefore it was *Necessary* (*in the Sense of Necessity I am now speaking of,*) that Things should be made at such time, and continued so long, and indued with various Perfections in such Degrees, as Infinite Wisdom and Goodness saw it *Wise* and *Best* that they should be: And *when* and *whilst* Things are in Being, the same Moral Perfections make it *Necessary*, that they should be disposed and governed according to the exactest and most unchangeable Laws of Eternal Justice, Goodness and Truth; Because while *Things* and their *several Relations* are, they cannot but *be* what they are; and an infinitely Wise Being cannot but *know* them to be what they are, and *judge* always *rightly* concerning the several Fitnesses or Unfitnesses of them; and an Infinitely Good Being, cannot but *choose* to *act* always according to this Knowledge of the respective Fitness of Things: It being as truly impossible for such a *Free Agent*, who is absolutely incapable of being Deceived or Depraved, to *Choose*, by acting contrary to these Laws, to destroy its own *Perfections*; as for *Necessary Existence* to be able to destroy its own *Being*.

Of the Im-
possibility of
his doing
Evil.

3dly. From hence it follows, that though God is both Perfectly Free, and also Infinitely Powerful, yet he cannot Possibly do any Thing that is *Evil*. The Reason of this also is Evident. Because, as 'tis manifest Infinite Power cannot extend to Natural Contradictions, which imply a Destruction of that very Power, by which they must be supposed

supposed to be wrought; so neither can it extend to Moral Contradictions, which imply a Destruction of some other Attributes, as necessarily belonging to the Divine Nature, as Power. I have already shown, that Justice, Goodness and Truth, are necessarily in God; even as necessarily, as Power and Understanding, and Knowledge of the Nature of Things: 'Tis therefore as Impossible and Contradictory to suppose *his Will should Choose* to do any thing contrary to Justice, Goodness or Truth; as that *his Power should be able* to Do any thing inconsistent with Power. 'Tis no Diminution of Power, not to be able to Do Things which are no Object of Power: And it is in like manner no Diminution either of Power or Liberty, to have such a Perfect and Unalterable Rectitude of Will, as never Possibly to *choose* to do any Thing inconsistent with that Rectitude.

4thly. From hence it follows that Liberty, *That Liberty is not properly speaking, is not in it self an Imperfection, but a Perfection. For it is in the highest and completest degree, in God himself; Every Act, wherein he Exercises any Moral Attribute, as Goodness, Justice or Truth, proceeding from the most Perfect Liberty and Freest Choice; without which, Goodness would not be Goodness, nor Justice and Truth any Excellencies; these things, in the very Idea and formal Notion of them, utterly excluding all Necessity. It has indeed been commonly taught, that Liberty is a great Imperfection; because it is the Occasion of all Sin and Misery: But, if we will speak properly, 'tis not Liberty that exposes us to Misery, but only the Abuse of Liberty.*

'Tis true; Liberty makes Men *capable* of Sin, and consequently liable to Misery; neither of which they could possibly be, without Liberty: But he that will say every thing is an Imperfection, by the Abuse whereof a Creature may become more unhappy, than if God had never given it that Power at all; must say that a *Stone* is a more excellent and Perfect Creature than *Man*, because it is not capable of making it self miserable, as *Man* is: And, by the same Argument, Reason and Knowledge, and every other Perfection, may even Existence it self, will be proved to be an Imperfection; because it is That, without which a Creature could not be miserable. The Truth therefore is; The Abuse of Liberty, that is, the Corruption and Depravation of That, without which no Creatures could be happy, is the alone Cause of their Misery: But as for Liberty it self, it is a great Perfection: And the more Perfect any Creature is, the more perfect is its Liberty: And the perfectest Liberty of all, is such a Liberty, as can never by any Ignorance, Deceit or Corruption, be byassed or diverted from Choosing, what is the Proper Object of Free Choice, the greatest Good.

That the highest Moral Perfection of Rational Creatures do not exclude Natural Liberty.

5thly. From hence it follows, that though probably no Rational Creature can be in a strict Philosophical Sense *Impeccable*; yet we may easily conceive, how God can place such Creatures, as he judges worthy of so excellent a Gift, in such a State of Knowledge and near Communion with himself, where Goodness and Holiness shall appear so amiable, and where they shall be exempt from all means of Temptation and Corruption; that

that it shall never be possible for them, notwithstanding the Natural Liberty of their Will, to be seduced from their unchangeable Happiness in the Everlasting Choice and Enjoyment of their greatest Good: Which is the State of Good Angels, and of the Saints in Heaven.

Lastly, From what has been said upon this Head, it follows, that the true Ground and Foundation of all Eternal Moral Obligations, is this; that the same Reasons, *That the Grounds of all Moral Obligations are eternal and necessary, and depend not on any Laws.* (*viz.* the forementioned necessary and eternal different Relations which different Things bear one to another; and the consequent Fitness or Unfitness of the Application of different Things, or different Relations one to another, unavoidably arising from that Difference of the Things themselves;) these same Reasons, I say, which always and necessarily do determine the Will of God, as hath been before shown; ought also constantly to determine the Will of all Subordinate Intelligent Beings: And when they do not, then such Beings setting up their own unreasonable Self-Will in opposition to the Nature and Reason of Things, endeavour (as much as in them lies) to make Things be what they are not and cannot be; which is the highest Presumption and greatest Insolence imaginable; an acting contrary to their own Reason and Knowledge; an attempting to destroy that Order by which the Universe subsists; and also, by consequence, an offering the highest affront imaginable to the Creator of all Things, who himself governs all his Actions by these Rules, and and cannot but require the same of all his

A Demonstration of the

reasonable Creatures. They who found all Moral Obligations ultimately in the *Will* of God, must recur at length to the same thing; only with this difference, that they do not clearly explain how the *Nature and Will of God himself* must be necessarily Good and Just, as I have endeavoured to do. They who found all Moral Obligations only upon *Laws* made for the good of Societies, hold an Opinion which (besides that 'tis fully confuted by what has been already said concerning the eternal and necessary difference of Things,) is moreover so directly and manifestly contradictory and inconsistent with it self, that it seems strange it should not have been more commonly taken notice of. For if there be no difference between Good and Evil, antecedent to all Laws; there can be no reason given why any Laws should be made at all, when all things are naturally indifferent. To say that Laws are necessary to be made for the good of Mankind, is confessing that certain Things tend to the Good of Mankind, that is, to the preserving and perfecting their Nature; which Wise Men *therefore* think necessary to be established by Laws: And if the reason why certain Things are established by wise and good Laws, is because those Things tend to the good of Mankind; 'tis manifest they were good, antecedent to their being confirmed by Laws: Otherwise, if they were not good antecedent to all Laws; 'tis evident there could be no reason why such Laws should be made, rather than the contrary: Which is the greatest Absurdity in the World,

And

AND now, from what has been said up-^{The Con-}
on this Argument, I hope it is in the ^{clusion}
whole sufficiently clear, that the Being and
Attributes of God, are to attentive and con-
sidering Minds, abundantly capable of just
Proof and Demonstration; and that the Ad-
versaries of God and Religion, have not
Reason on their side, (to which they would
pretend to be strict Adherers,) but merely
vain Confidence, and great Blindness and
Prejudice; when they would have it be
thought, that in the Fabrick of the World,
God has left himself wholly without Wit-
ness; and that all the Arguments of Nature,
are on the side of Atheism and Irreligion.
Some Men, I know, there are, who having
never turned their Thoughts to Matters of
this Nature, think that these Things are all ab-
solutely above our Comprehension; and that
we talk about we know not what, when we
dispute about these Questions: But since
the most considerable Atheists that ever ap-
peared in the World, and the Pleaders for U-
niversal Fatality, have all thought fit to argue
in this Way, in their Attempts to remove
the First Foundations of Religion; it is
Reasonable and Necessary that they should
be opposed in their own Way; it being most
certain, that no Argumentation, of what
kind soever, can possibly be made use of on
the side of Errour but may also be used with
much greater Advantage on the behalf of
Truth.

2. From what has been said on this Ar-
gument, we may see how it comes to pass,
that though nothing is so certain and undeni-

able as the Necessary Existence of God, and the consequent Deduction of all his Attributes; yet Men, who have never attended to the Evidence of Reason, and the Notices that God hath given us of Himself, may easily be in great measure ignorant of Both. That the three Angles of a Triangle are Equal to two right ones, is so certain and evident, that whoever affirms the contrary, affirms what may very easily be reduced to an express Contradiction: Yet whoever bends not his Mind to consider it at all, may easily be ignorant of this and numberless other the like Mathematical and most infallible Truths.

3. Yet the Notices that God has been pleased to give us of himself, are so many and so obvious; in the Constitution, Order, Beauty and Harmony of the several Parts of the World; in the Frame and Structure of our own Bodies, and the wonderful Powers and Faculties of our Souls; in the unavoidable Apprehensions of our own Minds, and the common Consent of all other Men; in every thing within us, and every thing without us; that no Man of the meanest Capacity and greatest Disadvantages whatsoever, with the slightest and most superficial Observation of the Works of God, and the lowest and most obvious attendance to the Reason of Things, can be ignorant of *Him*, but he must be utterly without excuse. He may not indeed be able to understand or be affected by Nice and Metaphysical Demonstrations of the Being and Attributes of God: But then for the same Reason, he is obliged also not to suffer himself to be shaken and unsettled

settled, by the subtle Sophistries of Sceptical and Atheistical Men; which he cannot perhaps answer, because he cannot understand: But he is bound to adhere to those Things which he knows, and those Reasonings he is capable to judge of; which are abundantly sufficient to determine and to guide the Practice of sober and considering Men.

4. But this is not all. God has moreover finally, by a clear and express *Revelation* of Himself, brought down from Heaven by his own Son, our Blessed Lord and Redeemer; and suited to every Capacity and Understanding; put to Silence the Ignorance of Foolish, and the Vanity of Sceptical and Profane Men: And by declaring to us himself his own Nature and Attributes, has effectually prevented all Mistakes, which the Weakness of our Reason, the Negligence of our Application, the Corruption of our Nature, or the false Philosophy of wicked and profane Men, might have led us into; and so has infallibly furnished us with sufficient Knowledge, to enable us to perform our Duty in this Life, and to obtain our Happiness in that which is to come. But this exceeds the Bounds of my present Subject, and deserves to be handled in a particular Discourse.

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...by the little Sophism of 20p-
...and Attributes, which he cannot
...answer, because he cannot under-
...stand: But he is bound to adhere to those
...Things which he knows, and these he
...is capable to judge of with
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...to guide the Pursuit of Labor with considering

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...Discourse.

A
DISCOURSE
Concerning the
Unchangeable Obligations
OF
NATURAL RELIGION,
AND THE
Truth and Certainty
OF THE
Christian Revelation.

Being Eight SERMONS Preach'd at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, in the Year 1705, at the Lecture Founded by the Honourable ROBERT BOTLE Esq;

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D. D. Rector of St. James's Westminster.

The Fourth Edition, Corrected.

Isa. 5, 20. *Wo unto them that call Evil Good, and Good Evil; that put Darkness for Light, and Light for Darkness; that put Bitter for Sweet, and Sweet for Bitter.*

Rom. 1, 22. *Professing themselves to be Wise, they became Fools.*

1 Cor. 2, 10. *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.*

London, Printed by Will. Botham, for James Knapton, at the Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1716.

DISCOURSE

Concerning the

Unchangeable Obligations

OF

NATURAL RELIGION

TO THE

OF THE

CONSTITUTION

OF THE
Church of England
as it stands at present
in the Kingdom of Great Britain
ROBERT BOYLE

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D.D.
Sermon Preached at St. James's Church



Printed by J. & J. Oldman, Stationers, in Pall Mall
1724

TO THE

Most Reverend Father in God

THOMAS

Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury* ;
and Primate of all *England* :

Sir *HENRY ASHURST*,
Baronet ;

Sir *JOHN ROTHERAM*,
Knight, Serjeant at Law ;

JOHN EVELIN, Esquire ;

Trustees appointed by the Ho-
nourable *ROBERT BOTLE*,
Esquire.

This Discourse is humbly De-
dicated.

TO THE
Most Reverend Father in God

THOMAS

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury
and Primate of all England

Sir Henry North
Baronet

Sir John North
Knight, Secretary of State

John Evelyn Esquire

Trusted, appointed by the Hon.
Honorable Robert Boyle
Esquire

The Director of the
Royal Society

THE
PREFACE.

I Should not have presumed to publish these Papers in Vindication of Natural and Revealed Religion, after so many excellent Discourses already written upon that Subject; had I not thought my self obliged to it, in order to pursue more fully the Design of the Honourable Founder of this Lecture, and to answer the Expectation of the Most Reverend and the Honourable Trustees appointed by him. The Honourable Robert Boyle Esq; was a Person no less zealously solicitous for the propagation of true Religion and the practice of Piety and Vertue; than diligent and successful in improving Experimental Philosophy, and inlarging our Knowledge of Nature. And it was his settled Opinion, that the advancement and increase of Natural Knowledge, would always
be

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be of Service to the Cause and Interest of true Religion, in opposition to Atheists and Unbelievers of all sorts. Accordingly he in his Life-time made excellent Use of his own Observations to this purpose, in all his Writings; and made Provision after his Death, for carrying on the same Design perpetually. In pursuance of which End I endeavoured, in my former Discourse, to strengthen and confirm the Arguments which prove to us the Being and Attributes of God, partly by metaphysical Reasoning, and partly from the Discoveries (principally those that have been lately made) in Natural Philosophy: And in the present Treatise, I have attempted, in a plainer and easier Method, to establish the Unalterable Obligations of Natural Religion, and the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation. If what I have said, may in any measure promote the Interest of true Religion in this sceptical and profane Age, and answer the Design for which this Lecture was founded; I have my End.

It may perhaps be expected, that I should take some notice of certain Remarks, which have been published upon my former Sermons. Had the Author of those Remarks entered into the Merits
of

The Preface.

of the Cause, or offered any considerable Reasons in opposition to what I had laid down; I should have thought my self obliged to give him a particular Answer. But since his Book is made up chiefly of Railing, and gross Misconstructions; and All that he pretends to say by way of Argument, depends entirely upon Supposition of the Truth of the Cartesian Hypothesis, which the best Mathematicians in the World have demonstrated to be false; I presume it may be sufficient, to show here the Insincerity of that Author, and the Weakness of his Reasoning, by a few brief Observations.

The only Argument he alleges against me in his whole Book, is This: That if we know not distinctly what the † Essence of God, and what the Essence of Matter is; we cannot possibly demonstrate them at all, to be two different Essences.

† Note, that in this whole Question, the Word *Essence* is not to be taken in the proper Metaphysical Sense of the Word, as signifying That by which a thing is what it is: For in that Sense, the Attributes of God do constitute his

Essence; and Solidity or Impenetrability is the Essence of Matter: But *Essence* is all along to be understood, as signifying the same with Substance.

To which I answer. 'Tis plain we know not the Essences of Things by Intuition;

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tuition; but can only reason about them from what we know of their different Properties or Attributes. Now from the demonstrable Attributes of God, and from the known Properties of Matter, we have as unanswerable Reasons to convince and satisfy us that their Essences are entirely different, though we know not distinctly what those Essences are; as our Faculties can afford us, in judging of any the certainest things whatsoever. For Instance: The demonstrable Attributes of God, are, that He is Self-Existent, Independent, Eternal, Infinite, Unchangeable, Incorruptible, Intelligent, Free, All-powerful, Wise, Just and Good: The known Properties of Matter, are, that it is * not Necessary or Self-Existent, but Dependent, Finite, (nay, that it fills but a few very small and inconsiderable portions of Space,) that it is Divisible, Passive, Unintelligent, and consequently incapable of any Active Powers. Now nothing can be more certain and evident, than that the Substances to which these incompatible Attributes or Properties belong, or the Essences from which they flow, are entirely different one from the other; though we do not distinctly know what the inmost Substances or Essences Themselves are. If any Man will think a mere

* See
Demon-
strat. pag.
22, &c.
& 49.

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mere Hypothesis (the Cartesian or any other) concerning the inmost Nature of Substances, to be a more satisfactory Discovery of the different Essences of Things, than we can make by Reasoning thus from their demonstrable Properties; and will chuse rather to draw fond Consequences from such Hypotheses and Fictions, founded upon no Proof at all, than to make use of such Philosophy as is grounded only upon clear Reason or good Experiments; I know no help for it, but he must be permitted to enjoy his Opinion quietly.

The rest of the Book is All either an indecent and unreasonable reviling of the learned Mr Lock; from whom I neither cited any one Passage, nor (that I know of) borrowed any Argument from him; And therefore is altogether Impertinent. Or else it consists of gross Misrepresentations of my Sense, and very unfair Constructions and false Citations of my Words; of which I shall presently give some Instances.

The first 8, and the 35th and 36th Pages of the Remarks, are spent in attempting to prove, that if we do not first know what the Essence of God, and what the Essence of Matter,

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The Preface.

is; (that is, if the Cartesian Hypothesis concerning the Essences of Spiritual and Material Substance, be not granted to be true;) there is no way left, by which it can be proved at all, that the Essence of God and Matter is not one and the same. To which I have already given an answer; viz, that from the demonstrable Attributes of God, and from the known Properties of Matter, we have as absolute certainty of their Essences or Substances being different, though we do not distinctly know what those Essences are; as our Faculties enable us to attain in any Metaphysical Question: And that he who will not allow this, to be sufficient Proof in the present case; but chooses rather to take up with a mere Hypothesis or Fiction concerning the Essences of Things; I think needs not be disputed with.

Pag. 12, The Author of the Remarks asserts, that Des-Cartes and his Followers have Mathematically proved, that the Essence of Matter consists in Length, Breadth, and Depth. And upon this confident Assertion, his whole Book depends in every part. To this therefore I answer, that That Hypothesis is really so far from being Mathematically proved to be True, that on the contrary He cannot but know, (if he knows any thing of these Matters,)

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Matters,) that the greatest Mathematicians in the present Age, Men confessedly greater in that Science than any that ever lived before them, have clearly proved (as I before said) that it is ^{† See} absolutely False. ^{Sir Isaac Newton's Principia, pag. 383 & 411.} And not to take the least notice of This throughout his whole Book, argues either great Insincerity, or great Ignorance.

I had said (Demonstrat. pag. 18.) that to Imagine an Eternal and Infinite Nothing, was being reduced to the Necessity of Imagining a Contradiction or Impossibility. For this, he argues against me (Remark. pag. 14,) as if I had asserted, that it was possible to imagine an Eternal and Infinite Nothing; whereas I asserted that it was an express Contradiction so to do. This is great Insincerity.

I had charged the Cartesians (Demonstrat. pag. 18) with being unavoidably reduced to the Absurdity of making Matter a necessarily-existing Being. In citing this Passage, (Remark. pag. 14 and 15) he ridiculously represents me as saying that this Absurdity consisted in making Extension necessary: Though he knew that in that very Passage I supposed Matter and Extension to be

The Preface.

intirely different Things. This likewise is great Insincerity.

I had said (Demonstrat. pag. 18) that the Idea of Immensity was an Idea that no way belonged to Matter. Instead of this, he cites me asserting senselessly (Remark. pag. 15) that Extension no way belongs to Matter. As if that which is not Immense or Infinite, is therefore not extended at all. This is the greatest Disingenuity in the World.

Remark. pag. 15. He says; I am sure this Author cannot produce One, no not One Cartesian, that ever made Matter a necessarily-existing Being; that ever contradicted himself in Words, upon this Subject; that ever was mightily, or not mightily, or at all perplexed with what Mr Clarke calls his Argument; nay, that ever heard of that Thing he calls his Argument. Why are they thus misrepresented and imposed upon? To this I answer: It had been sufficient to make good my charge, to have shown, that from the Cartesian Hypothesis it followed by unavoidable consequence, that Matter must be a necessarily-existing Being; though the Cartesians themselves had

not

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not seen that Consequence. Yet I cited
 moreover a Passage out of Regis;
 wherein 'tis plain He perceived and
 owned that Consequence. But because
 the Remarker seems not satisfied with
 this, and pretends to triumph here with
 great pleasure and assurance; I will for
 once comply with his Challenge, and
 produce him Another, and That an un-
 exceptionable Cartesian, namely Des-Cartes
 himself, who Was greatly perplexed with
 the Argument I mentioned, and was un-
 avoidably reduced to make Matter a ne-
 cessarily-existing Being, and at the same
 time did contradict himself in Words up-
 on this Subject. It was Objected to Des-
 Cartes by some very learned Men, that

* if Extension and Mat-
 ter were the same thing,
 it seemed to them to
 follow, that God could
 neither possibly make the
 World finite, nor annihi-
 late any part of Matter
 without creating at the
 same time just as much
 more to supply its Place.
 To this He Answers: †
 That, according to his
 Hypothesis, it does indeed
 imply a Contradiction to
 suppose the World to be

* Quæro an a Deo fieri
 potuisset ut mundus esset
 finitus. Epist. ad Carte-
 sium 68, Partis primæ.

Nondum illud possum
 concoquere, eam esse in-
 ter res corporeas connex-
 ionem, ut nec mundum
 Deus creare potuerit nisi
 infinitum, nec ullum cor-
 pus in nihilum redigere,
 quin eo ipso teneatur ali-
 ud paris quantitatæ sta-
 tim creare Epist. 5,
 Partis secundæ.

† Puto implicare Con-
 tradictionem, ut Mundus
 sit finitus. Cartes. Epist. 69.
 Partis primæ.

Mihi autem non videtur
 de ulla unquam re esse

Finite

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dicendum, ipsam a Deo fieri non posse: Cum enim Omnis Ratio Veri & Boni ab ejus Omnipotentia dependeat; nequidem dicere ausim, Deum facere non posse ut Mons sit sine Valle, vel ut Unum & Duo non sunt Tria; sed tantum dico, talia implicare contradictionem in meo conceptu; quod idem etiam de Spatio, quod sit plane vacuum &c. Epist. 6. Partis secundæ.

Finite, or to suppose God annihilating any part of Matter; but yet he will not say God cannot do it, or that God cannot cause that Two and Three shall not make Five, or any other Contradiction whatsoever. Is not this making Matter a necessarily-existing Being, to own

that it is a Contradiction to suppose God annihilating it or setting bounds to it? Is not this Contradicting himself, for a Man to affirm (as Cartes does in all his Writings) that the World was Created by God and Depends upon him, and yet at the same time to declare that it implies as plain a Contradiction to suppose any part of Matter annihilable by the Power of God, as to suppose that two and three should not make Five? Is not this really a ridiculing the Power of God? And was not Des-Cartes therefore greatly perplexed with the Argument I mentioned? And is not an Hypothesis, from which such Consequences unavoidably and confessedly follow, a fine Land-mark of Distinction between Spiritual and Material Substances? and whatever opposes this Hypothesis, a * depriving us

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of the Means of proving the Existence of the one only true God?

The Remarker humbly desires his Reader (pag. 16) to be persuaded, that he is of no particular Sect in Matters of Philosophy, but only of the Party of Truth where-ever he meets with it. Yet the same Man had declared before (pag. 12.) that he believed Des-Cartes had Mathematically proved his Hypothesis; and takes not the least Notice of its having since been fully confuted by Mathematicians confessedly far more eminent in that Science, than Des-Cartes was. This is a very singular Mark of Impartiality, and of being addicted to no Party in Matters of Philosophy.

Speaking of the Cartesian Argument drawn from the Idea of God, I had used these Words, (Demonstrat. pag. 20;) Our first Certainty of the Existence of God arises not from this; that, in the Idea we frame of him in our own Minds, or rather in the Definition that we make of the Word [God,] as signifying a Being of all possible Perfections, we include Self-Existence? But &c. Meaning, that, according to That Argument, Self-Existence was rather made only a part

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of the Definition of the Word, than proved to be a real Attribute of the Being it self. Instead of this, the Remarker (pag. 17 and 19) by a childish misunderstanding of the Syntax of the Sentence, and referring the Particle [or] to a wrong Member of the Period, cites my Words in a quite different manner; as if I had said, In the Idea we frame of God in our own Minds, or rather in the Idea we frame of him in the Definition that we make of the Word, &c. And he is very facetious (pag. 17 and 19) in ridiculing this framing of an Idea in a Definition; which he calls, as it truly is, a Real Piece of Nonsense. But when, upon the review, he finds himself the true and only Author of it, for want of understanding Grammar; I suppose it will make him more modest and careful.

He accuses me (Remark. pag. 18. 20; &c.) of not understanding the Cartesian Argument drawn from the Idea of God. I confess my self very ready to submit to this Charge; And I can shew him much more Learned Writers than either of Us, who have likewise † not understood that Argument. If He does understand it, he will do the World a very acceptable piece of Service to make it out. What

† See Cudworth's System, pag. 721.

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What he says in his 21st, 22d, 23d, and 24th pages, is such a heap of Misconstructions, and so entirely void of Sense, that I confess I cannot at all tell what he means.

From my using the Word Mere Matter, he concludes (pag. 29,) that I imagine there is another sort of Matter, which is not a mere, bare, pure, inco-
gitative Matter; and that These Terms necessarily import this Sense. Whereas in every one of the places he cites, it is as express and evident as Words can make it, that by Mere Matter I understand the Matter of which the World consists, not as opposed to Another sort of Matter, but either as † opposed to Motion and to the Form † Demon-
of the World, or as * considered by it-^{strat. pag.} self and without the Government and * Demon-
Direction of a Supreme Intelligent Mind.^{25, &c.}
This therefore is the highest degree of In-^{36, 31,} sincerity.^{61.}

He charges me (pag. 4 and 29 and 30) with making a Translation quite different from Spinoza's Sense and Words. How I could mistranslate what I did not translate at all, I understand not: But whether I have misrepresented

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represented Spinoza's Sense, or no, (as I think I have not.) This I can only leave to the learned World to judge.

I reduced Spinoza's Opinion to this; That the Material World, and every part of it, with the Order and Manner of Being of each Part, is the only Self-Existing or Necessarily-Existing Being. And this I think

† *Præter Deum nulla dari neq; concepi potest substantia. Spinoz. Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 14.*

Una Substantia non potest produci ab alia Substantia. Prop. 6.

Res nullo alio modo neq; alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productæ sunt. Prop. 33.

Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet Existere. Prop. 7.

† *Omnes qui naturam divinam aliquo modo contemplantur, Deum esse Corporeum negant. Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 15. Schol.*

is as clearly contained in the † Words I cited from him, (Demonstrat. pag. 26, 27 and 28,) as any thing can be. Here the Remarker asserts (pag. 30,) that Spinoza never taught this Doctrine, nay, that he taught the quite contrary. To prove which, he cites a Passage, where Spinoza affirms, that † All who have in any degree considered the Di-

vine Nature, deny that God is Corporeal. Now this also is extremely Insincere. For had this Author cited here the whole Sentence of Spinoza, as he had cited it before in his 26th page; it would have appeared evidently, that Spinoza,

by

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by denying God to be Corporeal, meant only fallaciously to deny his being any particular Piece of Matter, any *Finite Body and of

a certain Figure. For, that He believed infinite Corporeal Substance, that is, the whole Material Universe, to be God; (besides the Places I had cited from him,) he in

express Words acknowledges, in a passage which this very Author cites

in the 4th page of his Remarks; And He maintains it at large through the whole of that very *Scholium, from whence the Remarker has

with the greatest insincerity taken the present Objection. But besides: Suppose Spinoza had not explained himself in this place, and had in this single Passage contradicted what he had plainly taught throughout the rest of his Book; would this have been any just Reason to say that Spinoza never taught the Doctrine I imputed to him? nay, that he taught the quite contrary?

* Per Corpus intelligimus quancumq; quantitatem, longam, latam, & profundam, certa aliqua figura terminatam; quoniam nihil absurdius de Deo, ente scilicet absolute infinito, dici potest. I.

Substantiam Corpoream quæ non nisi infinita concipi potest, nulla ratione naturæ divinæ indigere esse dici potest.

* Schol. ad Prop. 15. Part. I.

He charges me (pag. 32) with arguing only against the Accessories of Atheism, and leaving the Essential Hypothesis

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pothesis in its full force; nay, with confirming and establishing (pag. 11) Spinoza's Atheism. It seems in the Opinion of this Author, that proving the Material World to be, not a Necessary but a Dependent Being, made, preserved and governed, by a Self-Existent, Independent, Eternal, Infinite Mind, of perfect Knowledge, Wisdom, Power, Justice, Goodness and Truth; is arguing only against the Accessories of Atheism; And that the Essential Hypothesis of Atheism is left untouched, may confirmed and established, by all who will not presume to define the Essence of that Supreme Mind according to the Unintelligible Language of the Schools, and the groundless Imagination of Des-Cartes concerning the Substance or Essence of Matter and Spirit. I confess it appears to me, on the contrary, that the Essence of Atheism lies in making God either an Unintelligent Being [such as is the Material World,] or at least a Necessary Agent [such as Spinoza makes his One Substance to be,] void of all Freedom, Wisdom, Power and Goodness; and that Other Metaphysical Disputes are only about the Accessories: And that there is much more Ground, on the other side, to suspect That very Hypothesis, of
which

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which this Writer is so fond, to be favourable to the Atheists main Purpose. For if from Des-Cartes's Notion of the Essence of Matter, it follows (as he himself, in the Places now cited, confesses in express words,) that it implies a Contradiction to suppose the Material World Finite, or to suppose any part of Matter can be annihilated by the Power of God; I appeal to this Author, whether This does not naturally tend to make Men think Matter a Necessary and Self-Existent Being.

He charges me (pag. 33.) with falsely accusing Spinoza, of making God a mere Necessary Agent; and cites a passage or two out of Spinoza, wherein that Author seems to assert the contrary. The words which I cited from Spinoza, do as clearly express what I charged him with, as 'tis possible for any thing to be expressed: For he asserts plainly, that * from the Power of God, All things proceed Necessarily; that All things are determined by the Necessity of the Divine Nature; that whatever is in the Power of God, must Necessarily exist; that things could not have been produced by God in any other Manner

* A summa Dei potentia
Omnia necessario effluxisse.

Omni ex Necessitate Divine
Naturæ determinata sunt &c.

Quicquid concipimus in
Dei potestate esse, id necessario est.

Res nullo alio modo, neque
alio ordine, a Deo produci
potuerunt, quam productæ
sunt.

Deum non operari ex Libertate
Voluntatis.

See more passages to the
same purpose, cited (Demonstrat.
pag. 66.)

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or Order, than they Now are; and that God does not Act by a Liberty of Will. All this the Remarker very insincerely passes over, without the least Notice. And the words which he cites out of Spinoza, do not at all prove the contrary to what I asserted. For when Spinoza says, that † God alone

† Sequitur, solum Deum esse causam Liberam.

Deus ex solis suæ naturæ legibus, & a nemine coactus agit.

is a Free Cause; and that God acts by the Laws of his own Nature, without being forced by Any;

'Tis evident, he does not there mean, a Freedom of Will; but only fallaciously signifies, that the Necessity by which all things exist in the manner they do, is an inward Necessity in the Nature of the Things themselves, in opposition to any Force put upon them from without; which external Force, 'tis plain indeed that [the τὸ πᾶν] the whole Universe (the God of Spinoza) cannot be subject to; because it is supposed to contain All things, within it self. But besides: Supposing (as I said before) that Spinoza had directly contradicted himself in this one passage; how would That have proved my charge against him to have been false?

He says (pag. 34) that I am guilty my self, of what I groundlessly imputed to Spinoza; viz. of making God a mere Necessary Agent: Namely, by affirming that there

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there is a Necessary Difference ~~between~~ Good and Evil, ~~and that~~ there is such a thing as Fitness and Unfitness, Eternally, Necessarily, and Unchangeably, in the Nature and Reason of things, Antecedently to Will and to all Positive or Arbitrary Appointment whatsoever. This, he says, is a groundless and positive Assertion; and plainly imports the Eternal Necessary Co-Existence of all things, as much as Spinoza's Hypothesis does. Is not this an admirable Consequence? Because I affirm the Proportions of things, and the Differences of Good and Evil, to be Eternal and Necessary; that therefore I affirm the Existence of the Things themselves, to be also Eternal and Necessary? Because I affirm the Proportion, suppose between a Sphere and a Cylinder, to be Eternal and Necessary; that therefore I affirm the Existence of Material Spheres and Cylinders, to be likewise Eternal and Necessary? Because I affirm the Difference between Virtue and Vice, to be Eternal and Necessary; that therefore I affirm Men, who practice Virtue or Vice, to have existed Eternally. This Accusation shows both extreme Ignorance, and great Malice, in the Author of the Remarks.

I had used these words, (Demonstrat. pag. 10,) How an Eternal Duration can now be actually Past, is a thing utterly as impossible for our narrow Understand-

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derstandings to comprehend, as any thing, that *is not* an express Contradiction, can be imagined to be; And yet, to say that *Nothing has existed from Eternity*, is to assert something still far more unintelligible, namely something that is really an express Contradiction. Instead of this, the Remarker (pag. 39) citing my Words, with extreme Disingenuity leaves out one half of the Sentence, and makes me to say absolutely, that something is still far more unintelligible than that which is utterly impossible to be understood. Such gross Misrepresentations as these, in leaving out one part of a Sentence, to make the rest Nonsense; can very hardly proceed, but from want of Honesty.

† See Demon-
strat.
pag. 22-
and 63.

Lastly, (pag. 41.) he says that in my Sermons there is not one Argument offered, to prove against Spinoza, that God is a Spirit. I persuaded myself, that proving God to be a † Being absolutely distinct from the Material World, Self-existent, Intelligent, Free, Al-lpowerful, Wise, and Good; had been proving him to be a Spirit. But, it seems, no Proof is of any Force with this Author, if it be not agreeable to the Cartesian Philosophy, in which alone he seems to have any knowledge. To this therefore, I am not obliged to trouble either my self or the Reader, with giving any further Answer.

THE

A

DISCOURSE

Concerning the
 Unalterable Obligations
 OF
 NATURAL RELIGION,
 AND THE
 Truth and Certainty
 OF THE
Christian Revelation.

HAVING in a former Discourse en- *The Intro-*
 deavour'd to lay firmly the first *duction.*
 Foundations of Religion, in the
 certainty of the Existence and
 of the Attributes of God; by proving sever-
 ally and distinctly :

*That Something must needs have existed
 from Eternity: and how great soever the
 Difficulties are, which perplex the Con-
 ceptions and Apprehensions we attempt
 to frame of an eternal Duration; yet they
 neither ought nor can raise in any Man's*

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Mind

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Mind any doubt or Scruple concerning the truth of the Assertion it self, that *Something has really been eternal.*

That there must have existed from Eternity *some One Unchangeable and Independent Being*; because to suppose an eternal succession of merely dependent Beings, proceeding one from another in an endless progression without any original Independent Cause at all, is supposing things that have in their own Nature no Necessity of Existing, to be *from Eternity* caused or produced by nothing; which is the very same Absurdity and expresse Contradiction, as to suppose them produced by Nothing at any *determinate time.*

That That unchangeable and independent Being, which has existed from eternity, without any external cause of its existence; must be *Self-existent*, that is, *Necessarily-existing.*

That it must of necessity be *Infinite* or every where present; a Being most *Simple, Uniform, Invariable, Indivisible, Incorruptible*, and infinitely removed from all such Imperfections, as are the known Qualities and inseparable Properties of the *Material World.*

That it must of necessity be but *One*; because to suppose two, or more, different Self-Existent independent Principles, may be reduced to a direct contradiction.

That it must necessarily be an *Intelligent Being.*

That it must be a *Free and Voluntary*, not a *Necessary Agent.*

That

and Revealed Religion.

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That this Being must of necessity have *Infinite Power*; and that in this Attribute is included particularly, a Possibility of creating or producing Things, and also a Possibility of communicating to Creatures the *Power of Beginning Motion*, and a Possibility of enduing them with *Liberty* or *Freedom of Will*; which Freedom of Will is not inconsistent with any of the *Divine Attributes*.

That He must of Necessity be infinitely *Wise*.

And lastly, *That* He must necessarily be a Being of infinite *Goodness, Justice, and Truth*, and all other moral Perfections; such as become the Supreme Governour and Judge of the World.

It remains now, in order to compleat my design of proving and establishing the Truth and Excellency of the whole Superstructure of our most Holy Religion; that I proceed upon this Foundation of the certainty of the *Being and Attributes of God*, to demonstrate in the next place the *unalterable Obligations of Natural Religion*, and the certainty of *Divine Revelation*; in opposition to the vain arguings of certain vicious and profane Men, who, merely upon account of their Incredulity, would be thought to be strict Adherers to Reason, and sincere and diligent Inquirers into Truth; when indeed on the contrary there is but too much cause to fear, that they are not at all sincerely and really desirous to be satisfied in the true State of Things, but

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only seek under the pretense and cover of Infidelity, to excuse their Vices and Debaucheries; which they are so strongly inclin'd to, that they cannot prevail with themselves upon any account to forsake them; And yet a rational Submitting to such Truths, as just Evidence and unanswerable Reason would induce them to believe, must necessarily make them uneasy under, and self-condemned in the practice of them. It remains therefore (I say) in order to finish the Design I propos'd to my self, of establishing the Truth and Excellency of our Holy Religion, in opposition to all such vain pretenders to Reason as these; that I proceed at this time, by a continuation of the same method of arguing, by which I before demonstrated the Being and Attributes of God, to prove distinctly the following Propositions.

I. *That the same necessary and eternal different Relations, that different Things bear one to another; and the same consequent Fitness or Unfitness of the Application of different Things or different Relations one to another, with regard to which the Will of God always and necessarily does determine it self to choose to act only what is agreeable to Justice, Equity, Goodness and Truth, in order to the Welfare of the whole Universe; ought likewise constantly to determine the Wills of all subordinate rational Beings, to govern all their Actions by the same Rules, for the Good of the publick in their respective Stations: That is, these eternal and necessary differences of Things, make*
it

it fit and reasonable for Creatures so to act; they cause it to be their *Duty*, or lay an *Obligation* upon them, so to do; even separate from the consideration of these Rules being the *positive Will or Command of God*; and also antecedent to any respect or regard, expectation or apprehension, of any *particular private and personal Advantage or Disadvantage, Reward or Punishment*, either present or future, annexed either by natural consequence or by positive appointment, to the practising or neglecting those Rules.

II. That though these eternal moral Obligations are indeed of themselves incumbent on all rational Beings, even antecedent to the consideration of their being the positive Will and Command of God; yet That which most strongly confirms, and in practise most effectually and indispensably inforces them upon us, is this; that both from the Nature of Things, and the Perfections of God, and from several other collateral considerations, it appears, that as God is himself necessarily Just and Good in the exercise of his infinite Power in the Government of the whole World, so he cannot but likewise positively *Require* that all his rational Creatures should in their Proportion be so too, in the exercise of each of their Powers in their respective Spheres: That is; as these eternal moral Obligations are really in perpetual Force merely from their own Nature and the abstract Reason of Things; so also they are moreover the express and unalterable *Will, Command and Law of God* to his Creatures, which he cannot but expect should in Obedience to his Supreme
Autho-

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Authority, as well as in compliance with the Natural Reason of Things, be regularly and constantly observed through the whole Creation.

III. *That* therefore, though these eternal moral Obligations are also incumbent indeed on all rational Creatures, antecedent to any respect of Particular Reward or Punishment; yet they *must* certainly and necessarily be attended with *Rewards and Punishments*: Because the same Reasons, which prove God himself to be necessarily Just and Good; and the Rules of Justice, Equity and Goodness, to be his unalterable Will, Law and Command, to all Created Beings; prove also that he cannot but *be pleased with and approve* such Creatures as imitate and obey him by observing those Rules, and *be displeased* with such as act contrary thereto; and consequently that he cannot but some way or other make a *suitable Difference* in his Dealings with them; and manifest his Supreme Power and absolute Authority, in finally supporting, maintaining, and vindicating effectually the Honour of these his Divine Laws; as becomes the Just and Righteous Governour and Disposer of all things.

IV. *That* consequently, though in order to establish this suitable difference between the Fruits or Effects of Virtue and Vice, so reasonable in itself, and so absolutely necessary for the Vindication of the Honour of God; the Nature of things, and the Constitution and Order of God's Creation, was originally such, that the observance of the
eternal

and Revealed Religion.

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eternal Rules of Justice, Equity and Goodness, does indeed of it self tend by direct and natural consequence to make all Creatures happy; and the contrary practise, to make them miserable: Yet since through some great and general Corruption and Depravation (whencesoever *That* may have arisen; the particular Original whereof could hardly have been known *Now* without Revelation;) since (I say) the condition of Men in this present State is such, that the natural order of Things in this World is in event manifestly perverted, and Virtue and Goodness are visibly prevented in great measure from obtaining their proper and due Effects in establishing Mens Happiness proportionable to their behaviour and practise; Therefore 'tis absolutely impossible, that the whole view and intention, the original and the final Design, of Gods creating such rational Beings as Men are, and placing them in this Globe of Earth, as the chief and principal, or indeed (may we not say) the only Inhabitants, for whose sake alone This part at least of the Creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated; 'tis absolutely impossible (I say) that the whole of Gods Design in all this, should be nothing more than to keep up eternally a succession of such short-lived Generations of Men as at present Are; and those in such a corrupt, confused, and disorderly State of Things, as we see the World is now in; without any due observation of the eternal Rules of Good and Evil, without any clear and remarkable Effect of the

the great and most necessary Differences of Things, and without any final vindication of the Honour and Laws of God in the proportionable reward of the best, or punishment of the worst of Men: And consequently it is certain and necessary, (even as certain as the moral Attributes of God before demonstrated,) that instead of the continuing an eternal succession of new Generations in the present Form and State of Things, there must at some time or other be such a Revolution and Renovation of Things, such a *future State* of existence of the same Persons, as that by an exact distribution of Rewards and Punishments therein, all the present Disorders and Inequalities may be set right; and that the whole Scheme of Providence, which to us who judge of it by only one small Portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and much confused; may appear at its consummation, to be a Design worthy of Infinite Wisdom, Justice and Goodness.

V. *That*, though the indispensable necessity of all the great and moral Obligations of Natural Religion, and also the Certainty of a future State of Rewards and Punishments, be thus in general deducible even demonstrably, by a Chain of clear and undeniable reasoning: Yet (in the present State of the World, by what means soever it came originally to be so corrupted, of which more hereafter,) such is the *Carelessness, Inconsiderateness, and Want of Attention* of the greater part of Mankind; so many the *Prejudices and false Notions* imbibed by

and Revealed Religion.

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by evil Education; so strong and violent the unreasonable *Lusts, Appetites and Desires* of Sense; and so great the *Blindness*, introduced, by *Superstitious Opinions, vitious Customs, and debauched Practices* through the World; that very few are able, in reality and effect, to discover these Things clearly and plainly for themselves; but Men have great need of particular *Teaching*, and much *Instruction*, to convince them of the *Truth*, and *Certainty*, and *Importance* of these things; to give them a due *Sense*, and clear and just *Apprehensions* concerning them; and to bring them effectually to the *practise* of the plainest and most necessary Duties.

VI. *That*, though in almost every Age there have indeed been in the Heathen World some wise and brave and good Men, who have made it their business to study and practise these things themselves, and to teach and exhort others to do the like; who seem therefore to have been raised up by Providence, as Instruments to reprove in some measure and put some kind of check to the extreme Superstition and Wickedness of the Nations wherein they lived: Yet none of these have ever been able to reform the World, with any considerably great and universal Success; Because they have been but very few, that have in earnest set themselves about this excellent Work; and they that have indeed sincerely done it, have themselves been intirely ignorant of some Doctrines, and very doubtful and uncertain of others, absolutely

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absolutely necessary for the bringing about that great End; and those things which they have been certain of and in good measure understood, they have not been able to prove and explain clearly enough; and those that they have been able both to prove and explain by sufficiently clear reasoning, they have not yet had *Authority* enough to inforce and inculcate upon Mens minds with so strong an impression, as to influence and govern the general practise of the World.

VII. *That* therefore there was plainly wanting a *Divine Revelation*, to recover Mankind out of their universally degenerate Estate, into a State suitable to the original Excellency of their Nature: Which Divine Revelation, both the Necessities of Men and there natural Notions of God, gavē them reasonable ground to expect and hope for; As appears from the Acknowledgments which the best and wisest of the Heathen Philosophers themselves have made, of their *Sense* of the necessity and want of such a Revelation; and from their Expressions of the hopes they had entertained, that God would sometime or other vouchsafe it unto them.

VIII. *That* there is *no other Religion* now in the World, but the Christian, that has any just pretense or tolerable appearance of Reason to be esteemed such a Divine Revelation: And therefore if Christianity be not true, there is no Revelation of the Will of God at all made to Mankind.

IX. *That*

IX. That the *Christian Religion*, considered in its primitive Simplicity, and as taught in the Holy Scriptures, has all the Marks and Proofs of its being actually and truly a Divine Revelation, that any Divine Revelation, supposing it was true, could reasonably be imagined or desired to have.

X. That the *Practical Duties* which the Christian Religion enjoyns, are all such, as are most agreeable to our natural Notions of God, and most perfective of the Nature, and conducive to the Happiness and Well-being of Men: That is, Christianity even in this single respect, as containing alone and in one consistent System all the Wise and good Precepts, (and those improved, augmented and exalted to the highest degree of Perfection,) that ever were taught singly and scatteredly, and many times but very corruptly, by the several Schools of the Philosophers; and this without any mixture of the fond, absurd and superstitious Practises of any of those Philosophers; ought to be embraced and practiced by all rational and considering Deists, who will act consistently, and steddily pursue the consequences of their own Principles; as at least the best Scheme and Sect of Philosophy, that ever was set up in the World; and highly probable, even though it had no external evidence, to be of Divine Original.

XI. That the *Motives*, by which the Christian Religion inforces the practice of these Duties; are such as are most suitable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and most answerable

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answerable to the natural Expectations of Men.

XII. *That the peculiar Manner and Circumstances, with which it enjoyns these Duties, and urges these Motives; are exactly consonant to the Dictates of sound Reason, or the unprejudiced Light of Nature; and most wisely perfective of it.*

XIII. *That all the [Credenda, or] Doctrines, which the true, simple, and uncorrupted Christian Religion teaches; (that is, not only those plain Doctrines, which it requires to be believed as fundamental and of necessity to eternal Salvation, but even All the Doctrines which it teaches as Matters of Truth;) are, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare Reason unassisted with Revelation, yet when discovered by Revelation, apparently most agreeable to sound unprejudiced Reason; have every one of them a natural tendency, and a direct and powerful influence, to reform Mens Lives and correct their Manners; and do together make up an infinitely more consistent and rational Scheme of Belief, than any that the wisest of the antient Philosophers ever did, or the cunningest of modern Unbelievers can invent or contrive.*

XIV. *That as this Revelation, to the Judgment of right and sober Reason, appears even of it self highly credible and probable; and abundantly recommends it self in its native Simplicity, merely by its own intrinsic Goodness and Excellency, to the practice of the most rational and considering Men, who are desirous in all their Actions to have satisfaction and com-*
fort

fort and good hope within themselves, from the Conscience of what they do: So it is moreover positively and directly proved, to be actually and immediately sent to us from God, *by the many infallible Signs and Miracles*, which the Author of it worked publicly as the Evidence of his Divine Commission; *by the exact completion both of the Prophecies* that went before concerning him, and of those that He himself delivered concerning things that were to happen after; and *by the Testimony* of his Followers; which in all its Circumstances was the most credible, certain, and convincing Evidence, that was ever given to any Matter of fact in the World.

XV. And Lastly; *That* they who will not, by such Arguments and Poofs as these, be convinced of the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Religion, and be persuaded to make it the Rule and Guide of all their Actions; *would not be convinced*, (so far as to influence their Hearts, and reform their Lives,) by *any other Evidence* whatsoever; no, not tho' One should rise on purpose from the dead, to endeavour to convince them.

I might here, before I enter on the particular Proof of these several Propositions, justly be allowed to premise, that having
Of the several sorts of Deists.
 Now to deal with another sort of Men, than those against whom my former Discourse was directed; and being consequently in some parts of this Treatise to make use of some other kinds of Arguments, than those which

which the Nature of that Discourse permitted and required; the same *demonstrative* force of reasoning, and even *Mathematical* certainty, which in the main Argument was there easy to be obtained, ought not here to be expected; but that such *moral* Evidence, or mixt Proofs from Circumstances and Testimony, as most Matters of Fact are only capable of, and wise and honest Men are always satisfied with, ought to be accounted sufficient in the present Case. Because all the Principles indeed upon which *Atheists* attempt to build their Schemes, are such as may by plain force of Reason, and undeniably demonstrative Argumentations, be reduced to express and direct Contradictions. But the *Deists* pretend to own all the Principles of Reason, and would be thought to deny nothing but what depends entirely on Testimony and Evidence of matter of Fact, which they think they can easily evade.

But, if we examine things to the bottom, we shall find that the Matter does not in reality lie here. For I believe there are in the World, at least in any part of the World where the Christian Religion is in any tolerable Purity professed, very *Few*, if *Any*, such *Deists* as will truly stand to all the Principles of unprejudiced Reason, and sincerely both in profession and practise own all the Obligations of Natural Religion, and yet oppose Christianity merely upon account of their not being satisfied with the strength of the Evidence of *matter of Fact*. A constant and sincere observance of all the *Laws*
of

of Reason and Obligations of Natural Religion, will unavoidably lead a Man to Christianity; if he has due opportunities of examining things, and will steddily pursue the Consequences of his own Principles: And all others, who pretend to be Deists without coming up to this, can have no fixt and settled Principles at all, upon which they can either argue or act consistently; but must of necessity sink into downright Atheism, (and consequently fall under the force of the former Arguments;) as may appear by considering the several Sorts of them.

1. Some Men would be thought to be ^{Of the first} Deists, because they pretend to believe the ^{sort of De-} Existence of an Eternal, Infinite, Indepen- ^{ists. And} dent, Intelligent Being; and, to avoid the ^{of Provi-} name of Epicurean Atheists, teach also that this Supreme Being made the World: Though at the same time they agree with the Epicureans in this, that they fancy

* God does not at all concern himself in the Government of the World, nor has any regard to, or care of, what is done therein. But, if we examin things duly, this Opinion must unavoidably terminate in absolute Atheism. For although to imagine that God at the Creation of

* Omnis enim per se Divum
natura necesse est
Immortali ævo summa cum
pace fruatur,
Semota a nostris rebus, se-
junctaq; longe.
Nam privata dolore omni,
privata periculis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, ni-
hil indiga nostri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur,
nec tangitur ira.

Lucret. lib. 1:

Τὸ μαχέριον ἢ ἀφ' ὧν, ἔτι αὐτὸ πρῶτα ἔχει, ἔτι ἄλλω πα-
ρίχει· ὥς ἔτι ὁραῖς, ἔτι χεῖρὶ συνέχεται. Laert. in vita Epicuri.

Nor is the doctrine of those Modern Philosophers, much different; who ascribe every thing to Matter and Motion, exclusive of Final Causes; and speak of God as an Intelligentia Supramundana: Which is the very Cant of Epicurus and Lucretius.

the

the World, or at the Formation of any particular part of it, could (if he had pleased,) by his infinite Wisdom, Foresight, and unerring Design, have originally so ordered, disposed, and adapted all the Springs and Series of future *necessary and unintelligent* Causes, that without the immediate interposition of his Almighty Power upon every particular occasion, they should regularly by Virtue of that original Disposition have produc'd Effects worthy to proceed from the Direction and Government of infinite Wisdom: Though this, I say, may possibly by very nice and abstract reasoning be reconcileable with a firm Belief both of the Being and Attributes of God, and also with a consistent Notion even of *Providence* it self; Yet to fancy that God originally created a *certain Quantity of Matter and Motion*, and left them to frame a World at adventures, without any determinate and particular view, design or direction; this can no way be defended consistently, but must of necessity recur to *downright Atheism*: As I shall show presently; after I have made only this One Observation, that as that Opinion is impious in it self, so the late improvements in Mathematicks and natural Philosophy have discovered, that as things Now are, That Scheme is plainly false and impossible in Fact. For, not to say, that, seeing Matter is utterly incapable of obeying any Laws, the very original Laws of Motion themselves cannot continue to take place, but by something Superiour to Matter, *continually* exerting on it a certain Force or Power according to such certain and determinate Laws; 'tis
now

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thereof, does either way equally give us a very noble Idea of *Providence*. Those Men indeed, who, merely through a certain vanity of Philosophizing, have been tempted to embrace that other Opinion, of all things being produced and continued only by a certain *Quantity of Motion*, originally impressed on *Matter* without any determinate Design or Direction, and left to it self to form a World at adventures; Those Men, I say, who, merely through a vanity of Philosophizing, have been tempted to embrace that Opinion, without attending whither it would lead them; ought not, indeed, to be directly charged with all the Consequences of it: But 'tis certain, that many under that cover, have really been Atheists, and the Opinion it self (as I before said) leads necessarily and by unavoidable consequence, to plain *Atheism*. For if God be an All-powerful, Omnipresent, Intelligent, Wise and Free Being, (as it hath been before demonstrated that he necessarily Is;) he cannot possibly but *know*, at all times and in all places, every thing that *is*; and *fore-know* what at all times and in all places 'tis fittest and wisest *should be*; and have perfect *Power* without the least labour, difficulty or opposition, to *order and bring to pass* what he so judges fit to be accomplished: And consequently 'tis impossible but

* Quo confesso, consistendum est eorum consilio mandum administrari. *Cic. de nat. Deor. lib. 2.*

* he must actually direct and appoint every particular thing and circumstance that is in the World or ever shall be, excepting only what by

by his own good pleasure he puts under the Power and Choice of subordinate Free Agents. If therefore God does not concern himself in the Government of the World, nor has any regard to what is done therein, it will follow that he is not an Omnipresent, All-powerful, Intelligent and Wise Being; and consequently, that he is not at all. Wherefore the Opinion of this sort of Deists, stands not upon any certain consistent Principles, but leads unavoidably to downright Atheism; And † however in Words they may confess a God, yet in reality and in truth they deny him.

† Epicurum verbis reli-
quisse Deos, re sustulisse.
Cic. de nat. Deor. lib. 2.

If, to avoid this, they will own God's ^{Humane} Government and Providence over the ^{Affairs, not} great- ^{beneath the} er and more considerable parts of the World, ^{regard of} but deny his Inspection and Regard to Providence, ^{humane Affairs here upon Earth,} as being

* too minute and small for the Supreme Governour of all things to concern himself in; This still amounts to the same. For if God be Omnipresent, All-knowing, and All-powerful, he cannot but equally know, and with equal ease be able to direct and govern, † all things as any, and the * minute things as the greatest: So that if he has no regard nor concern, for these things; his Attributes must, as before, be denied; and consequently

* Εἰσι γὰρ πλεῖστοι οἱ νομίζοντες τὰ θεῶν, καὶ τοιαῦτα διαπερὶ ὁ λόγος αὐτὰ ἐξέφηνεν, ἀγνοῦν, καὶ δυνάμει ἔχοντα τὴν ἀκροτάτην, καὶ γυνώσκοντα τὴν τελειοτάτην τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ παρὰ τὴν φύσιν, ὡς μικρῶν καὶ εὐτελεῶν ὄντων, καὶ ἀναξίων τῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιμελεσθαι. Simplic. in E-
pictet.

† Deorum providentia mundus administratur; itemque consulant rebus humanis; neque solum universis, verum etiam Singulis. C.c. de Divinat. lib. 1.

* Ἄλλ' ἐν τὰς αὐτοῦ ἐν χαλεπῶν ἀνδραγαθῶν τῶν

τογα, ὡς ἐπιμελῆς συμπε-
ρίσσει, ἐκ ἡττοῦ ἢ τῆ με-
γέθυ διαφερόντων. Plato
de Leg. Lib. 10.

Ἐἰ δὲ τὸ ὅλον κόσμον ὁ θεὸς
ἐπιμελεῖται, ἀνάγκη καὶ τῶν
μερῶν αὐτοῦ περιεσθῆναι: ὥστε
καὶ αἱ τέχναι ποιῆσαι. Καὶ γὰρ
ἰατροὶ τε ὅλον σώμα ὅσον ἐπι-
μελεῖσθαι περιεσθῆναι, καὶ
ἀνὰ μελὸς τῶν μερῶν ἐδὲ
σεσχηγῆς, ἐδὲ οἰκονομεῖ, ἢ
παιδικὸς ἀνὴρ ἢ γὰρ με-
ρῶν ἀμὲν μὲν, ἀνάγκη
χειροῦς τὸ ὅλον διαπείθεσθαι.
S. mplic. in Epictet.

his Being. But besides: *Hu-
mane Affairs* are by no means
the minutest and most in-
considerable part of the Crea-
tion: For, (not to consider
Now *That* Excellency of *Hu-
mane Nature*, which *Chri-
stianity* discovers to us;) let
a Deist suppose the Universe
as large as the widest Hy-
pothesis of Astronomy will
give him leave to imagine;
or let him suppose it as im-
mense as he himself pleases,

and filled with as great numbers of ra-
tional Creatures as his own Fancy can
suggest; Yet the *System* wherein we are
placed, will, at least for ought he can
reasonably suppose, be as considerable as
any other single *System*; And the *Earth*
whereon we dwell, as considerable as
most of the other *Planets* in this *Sy-
stem*; And *Mankind* manifestly the only
considerable Inhabitants on this *Globe* of
Earth. *Man* therefore has manifestly a bet-
ter claim to the particular regard and con-
cern of Providence, than any thing else in
this *Globe* of ours; And *this our Globe* of
Earth, as just a pretence to it, as most other
Planets in the *System*; And *this System*, as
just an one, as far as we can judge, as any
System in the Universe. If therefore there
be any Providence at all, and God has any
concern for any part of the World; *Man-
kind*, even separate from the consideration
of that Excellency of *Humane Nature*
which

which the Christian Doctrine discovers to us, may as reasonably be supposed to be under its particular Care and Government, as any other part of the Universe.

2. Some others there are, that call themselves *Deists*, because they believe, not only the Being, but also the Providence of God; that is, that every *natural* thing that is done in the World, is produc'd by the Power, appointed by the Wisdom, and directed by the Government of God; Though, not allowing any difference between *moral Good and Evil*, they suppose that God takes no notice of the *morally good or evil* Actions of Men; these things depending, as they imagine, merely on the arbitrary Constitution of Humane Laws. But how handsomly soever these Men may seem to speak, of the *natural Attributes* of God, of his Knowledge, Wisdom and Power; yet neither can this Opinion be settled on any certain Principles, nor defended by any consistent Reasoning; nor can the *natural Attributes* of God be so separated from the *moral*, but that he who denies the latter, may be reduced to a necessity of denying the former likewise. For since (as I have formerly proved,) there cannot but be eternal and necessary Differences of different things one from another; and from these necessary Differences of things, there cannot but arise a Fitness or Unfitness of the Application of different Things or different Relations one to another; and infinite Knowledge can no more fail to Know, or infinite Wisdom to Choose, or infinite Power to Act according to these

eternal Reasons and Proportions of things, than Knowledge can be Ignorance, Wisdom be Folly, or Power Weakness; and consequently the Justice and Goodness of God, are as certain and necessary, as his Wisdom and Power; It follows unavoidably, that he who denies the Justice or Goodness of God, or, which is all one, denies his exercise of these Attributes in inspecting and regarding the moral Actions of Men; must also deny, either his Wisdom, or his Power, or both; and consequently must needs be driven into *absolute Atheism*. For though in some moral Matters, Men are not indeed to be judged of by the Consequences of their Opinions, but by their Profession and Practice; yet in the present

* Quasi ego id curem, quid ille aiatur neget: Illud quaro, quid ei consentaneum sit dicere, qui &c. Cic. de Finib. lib. 2.

Case it * matters not at all what Men affirm, or how honourably they may seem to speak of some particular Attributes of God; but what, notwithstanding such Profession, must needs in all reason be supposed to be their true Opinion; and their *Practice* appears answerable to it.

Profane

and debauched Deists, not capable of being argued with.

For concerning these two sorts of Deists, it is observable, that as their Opinions can terminate consistently in nothing but down-right *Atheism*; so their *Practice and Behaviour* is exactly agreeable to that of the most openly professed *Atheists*. They not only oppose the *Revelation* of Christianity, and reject all the moral Obligations of natural Religion, as such; but generally they despise

spise also the Wisdom of all *Humane Constitutions* made for the order and benefit of Mankind, and are as much contemners of *common Decency* as they are of *Religion*. They endeavour to ridicule and banter all *Humane* as well as *Divine* Accomplishments; all Virtue and Government of a Man's self, all Learning and Knowledge, all Wisdom and Honour, and every thing for which a *Man* can justly be commended or be esteemed more excellent than a *Beast*. They pretend commonly in their Discourse and Writings, to expose the Abuses and Corruptions of Religion; but (as it is too manifest in some of their modern Books, as well as in their Talk,) they aim really against all Virtue in general, and all good Manners, and against whatsoever is truly valuable and commendable in Men. They pretend to ridicule certain Vices and Follies of ignorant or superstitious Men; but the many very profane and very lewd Images, with which they industriously affect to dress up their Discourse, show plainly that they really do not so much intend to expose and deride any Vice or Folly, as on the contrary to foment and please the debauched and vitious Inclinations of Others as void of shame as Themselves. They discover clearly, that they have no sense at all of the dignity of *Humane Nature*, nor of the Superiority and Excellency of their Reason above even the meanest of the Brutes. They will sometime in words seem to magnify the Wisdom and other natural Attributes of God;

but in reality, by ridiculing whatever bears any resemblance to it in Men, they show undeniably that they do not indeed believe there is any real difference in Things, or any true excellency in one thing more than in another. By turning every thing alike, and without exception, into ridicule and mockery; they declare plainly, that they don't believe any thing to be wise, any thing decent, any thing comely or praiseworthy at all. They seem not to have any esteem or value, for those distinguishing Powers and Faculties; by induing them wherewith, God has taught them more than the Beasts of the Field, and made them wiser than the Fowls of Heaven. In a word: *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise;* these things they make the constant Subject of their mockery and abuse, ridicule and raillery. On the contrary; whatsoever things are profane, impure, filthy, dishonourable and absurd; these things they make it their business to represent as harmless and indifferent, and to laugh Men out of their natural shame and abhorrence of them; nay, even to recommend them with their utmost Wit. Such Men as these, are not to be argued with, till they can be persuaded to use *Arguments* instead of *Drollery*. For *Banter* is not capable of being answered by *Reason*: Not because it has any strength in it; but because it runs out of all the bounds

bounds of Reason and good Sense, by extravagantly joining together such Images, as have not in themselves any manner of Similitude or Connexion; by which means all things are alike easie to be rendred ridiculous; by being represented only in an absurd Dress. These Men therefore are first to be convinced of the true Principles of Reason, before they can be disputed with; and then they must of Necessity either retreat into downright *Atheism*, or be led by undeniable Reasoning to acknowledge and submit to the Obligations of *Morality*, and heartily repent of their profane Abuse of God and Religion.

3. Another sort of *Deists* there are, who ^{Of the} having right Apprehensions concerning the ^{third sort} *natural Attributes* of God, and his All-go-^{of Deists.} verning Providence; seem also to have some Notion of his *moral Perfections* also: That is, as they believe him to be a Being infinitely Knowing, Powerful and Wise; so they believe him to be also in some Sense a Being of infinite Justice, Goodness and Truth; and that he governs the Universe by these Perfections, and expects suitable Obedience from all his rational Creatures. But then, having a prejudice against the Notion of the *Immortality of Humane Souls*, they believe that Men perish intirely at Death, and that one Generation shall perpetually succeed another, without any thing remaining of Men after their departure out of this Life, and without any future restoration or renovation of things. And imagining that Justice and Goodness in God,

are

are not the same as in the Ideas we frame of these Perfections when we consider them in Men, or when we reason about them abstractly in themselves; but that in the Supreme Governour of the World they are something *Transcendent*, and of which we cannot make any true Judgment, nor argue with any certainty about them; They fancy, though there does not indeed seem to Us to be any Equity or Proportion in the distribution of Rewards and Punishments in this present Life, yet that We are not sufficient Judges concerning the Attributes of God, to argue from thence with any assurance for the certainty of a future State. But neither does this Opinion stand on any consistent Principles. For if Justice and

Goodness be not * the same in God, as in our Ideas; then we mean nothing, when we say that God is necessarily Just and Good; and for the same Reason it may

* Καὶ ἡμᾶς οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ ἀρετὴ ὅτι καὶ μακαρίων πάντων ὥστε καὶ ἡ αὐτῷ ἀρετὴ ἀνθρώπων καὶ θεῶν. *Orig. contr. Cels. lib. 4.*

as well be said, that we know not what we mean, when we affirm that he is an Intelligent and Wise Being; and there will be no Foundation at all left, on which we can fix any thing. Thus the *moral Attributes* of God, however they be acknowledg'd in Words, yet in reality they are by these Men entirely taken away; and, upon the same grounds, the *natural Attributes* may also be denied. And, so upon the whole, this Opinion likewise, if we argue upon it consistently, must finally recur to absolute Atheism.

4. The

4. The last sort of *Deists* are those, who ^{Of the fourth sort of Deists.} if they did indeed believe what they pretend, have just and right Notions of God, and of all the Divine Attributes in every respect; Who declare they believe *that* there is One, Eternal, Infinite, Intelligent, All-powerful and Wise Being; the Creator, Preserver, and Governour of all Things; *That* this Supreme Cause is a Being of infinite Justice, Goodness and Truth, and all other moral as well as natural Perfections; *That* he made the World for the manifestation of his Power and Wisdom, and to communicate his Goodness and Happiness to his Creatures; *That* he preserves it by his continual All-wise Providence, and governs it according to the Eternal Rules of infinite Justice, Equity, Goodness, Mercy and Truth; *That* all created rational Beings, depending continually upon him, are bound to adore, worship and obey him; to praise him for all things they enjoy, and to pray to him for every thing they want; *That* they are All obliged to promote, in their proportion, and according to the extent of their several powers and abilities, the general good and welfare of those Parts of the World, wherein they are placed, in like manner as the Divine Goodness is continually promoting the Universal Benefit of the Whole; *That* Men in particular, are every one obliged to make it their Business, by an universal Beneyolence, to promote the Happiness of all others; *That* in order to this, every Man is bound always to behave himself so towards Others, as in reason he would

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would desire they should in like circumstances deal with him; *That* therefore, he is obliged to obey and submit to his Superiours in all just and right things, for the preservation of Society, and the peace and benefit of the Publick; to be just and honest, equitable and sincere, in all his dealings with his Equals, for the keeping inviolable the everlasting Rule of Righteousness, and maintaining an universal trust and confidence, friendship and affection amongst Men; and, towards his Inferiors, to be gentle and kind, easie and affable, charitable and willing to assist as many as stand in need of his help, for the preservation of universal Love and Benevolence amongst Mankind, and in imitation of the Goodness of God, who preserves and does good to all Creatures, which depend intirely upon Him for their very Being and all that they enjoy; *That*, in respect of Himself, every Man is bound to preserve, as much as in him lies, his own Being and the right use of all his Faculties, so long as it shall please God, who appointed him his Station in this World, to continue him therein; *That* therefore he is bound to have an exact Government of his Passions, and carefully to abstain from all Debaucheries and Abuses of himself, which tend either to the Destruction of his own Being, or to the disordering his Faculties, and disabling him from performing his Duty, or hurrying him into the practise of unreasonable and unjust things; Lastly, *That* accordingly as Men regard or neglect these Obligations,

so

so they are proportionably acceptable or displeasing unto God; who being Supreme Governour of the World, cannot but testify his Favour or Displeasure at some time or other; and consequently, since this is not done in the present State, therefore there must be a future State of Rewards and Punishments in a Life to come. *But* all this, the Men we are now speaking of, *pretend to believe* only so far, as it is discoverable by the Light of Nature alone; without believing any Divine Revelation. These, I say, are the only *true Deists*; and indeed the only Persons who ought in reason to be argued with, in order to convince them of the Reasonableness, Truth, and Certainty of the *Christian Revelation*. But alas, there is, as I* before said, too much reason to believe, that there are very few or none *such Deists* as these, among our modern Deniers of Revelation. For such Men as I have now described, if they would at all attend to the Consequences of their own Principles, could not fail of being quickly persuaded to embrace *Christianity*. For, being fully convinced of the *Obligations of Natural Religion*, and the Certainty of a *future state of Rewards and Punishments*; and yet observing at the same time, how little Use Men generally are able to make of the Light of Reason, to discover the *one*, or to convince themselves effectually of the certainty and Importance of the *other*; 'tis impossible but they must be sensible of the want of a Revelation; 'tis impossible but they must earnestly desire God would be pleased,

pleased, by some immediate discovery of his Will, to make these things more *clear* and *plain*, more *easy* and *obvious*, more *certain* and *evident* to all Capacities; 'tis impossible but they must wish, God would be pleased particularly, to signify expressly the acceptableness of Repentance, and his willingness to forgive returning Sinners; 'tis impossible but they must be very solicitous, to have some more particular and certain information concerning the nature of that future State, which Reason teaches them in general to expect. The Consequence of this, is, that they must needs be possessed beforehand with a strong Hope, that the Christian Revelation may upon due examination appear to be true; They must be infinitely far from ridiculing and despising any thing that pretends to be a Divine Revelation, before they have sincerely and thoroughly examined it to the bottom: They must needs be beforehand very much disposed in its favour; and be very willing to be convinced, that what tends to the advancing and perfecting the Obligations of natural Religion, to the securing their great Hopes, and ascertaining the Truth of a future State of Rewards and Punishments; and can any way be made appear to be worthy of God, and consistent with his Attributes; and has Any reasonable Proof of the Matters of Fact it depends upon; is really and truly, what it pretends to be, a *Divine Revelation*. And now is it possible that any Man with these opinions and these dispositions, should continue to reject *Christianity*,

anity, when proposed to him in its original and genuine Simplicity, without the Mixture of any corruptions or inventions of Men? Let him read the Sermons and Exhortations of our Saviour, as delivered in the *Gospels*; and the Discourses of the Apostles preserved in their *Acts* and their *Epistles*; and try if he can withstand the evidence of such a Doctrine, and reject the hopes of such a glorious Immortality so discovered to him. The *Heathen Philosophers*, *That there* those few of them, who taught and lived *is now no* up to the Obligations of natural Religion, *consistent* had indeed a consistent Scheme of Deism, *Scheme of* so far as it went; and they were very *Deism in* the World: Brave and Wise Men, if any of them could keep steady and firm to it. But the Case is not so *Now*. The same Scheme of Deism is not any longer consistent with its own Principles, if it does not *Now* lead Men to embrace and *believe* Revelation, as it *Then* taught them to *hope* for it. *Deists*, in our Days, who obstinately reject Revelation when offered to them, are not such Men as *Socrates* and *Tully* were; but, under pretense of Deism, 'tis plain they are generally Ridiculers of all that is truly excellent even in natural Religion it self. Could we see a Deist, whose Mind was heartily possess'd with worthy and just apprehensions of all the Attributes of God, and a deep Sense of his Duty towards that Supreme Author and Preserver of his Being: Could we see a Deist, who lived in an exact performance of all the Duties of natural Religion; and by the practise of Righteousness, Justice,

fice, Equity, Sobriety and Temperance;
 expressed in his Actions, as well as Words,
 a firm belief and expectation of a future
 State of Rewards and Punishments: In a
 word, Could we see a Deist, who with re-
 verence and modesty, with sincerity and
 impartiality, with a true and hearty de-
 sire of finding out and submitting to Reason
 and Truth, would inquire into the Founda-
 tions of our belief, and examine thoroughly
 the pretensions which pure and uncorrupt
 Christianity has to be received as a Divine
 Revelation; I think we could not doubt
 to affirm of such a Person, as our Saviour
 did of the young Man in the Gospel, that
 he was *not far from the Kingdom of God*;
 and that, being *willing to do his Will*, he
should know of the Doctrine, whether it was
of God. But, as I have said, there is great
 reason to doubt, there are no such Deists as
 these, among the Infidels of our Days.
 This indeed is what they sometimes pre-
 tend, and seem to desire should be thought
 to be their Case: But alas, their trivial
 and vain Cavils; their mocking and ridi-
 culing, without and before examination;
 their directing the whole stress of their Ob-
 jections, against particular Customs, or par-
 ticular and perhaps uncertain Opinions, or
 explications of Opinions, without at all con-
 sidering the main Body of Religion; their
 loose, vain, and frothy Discourses; and above
 all, their vitious and immoral Lives; show
 plainly and undeniably, that they are not real-
 ly *Deists*, but mere *Atheists*; and consequently
 not capable to judge of the Truth of Christi-
 anity.

anity. If they were truly and in earnest such *Deists* as they pretend and would sometimes be thought to be; those Principles (as has been already shown in part, and will more fully appear in the following Discourse;) would unavoidably lead them to *Christianity*; but being such as they really are, they cannot possibly avoid recurring to downright *Atheism*.

The Sum is this: There is now * no such Thing, as a consistent Scheme of *Deism*. That which alone was once such, namely the Scheme of the best *Heathen Philosophers*, ceases now to be so, after the appearance of Revelation; Because (as I have already shown, and shall more largely prove in the sequel of this Discourse,) it directly conducts Men to the belief of *Christianity*. All other Pretences to *Deism*, may by unavoidable consequence be forc'd to terminate in absolute *Atheism*. He that cannot prevail with himself to obey the *Christian Doctrine*, and imbrace Those hopes of *life and immortality*, which our Saviour has brought to light through the Gospel; cannot Now be imagined to maintain with any firmness, steddiness and certainty, the belief of the *Immortality of the Soul*, and a future State of Rewards and Punishments after death; Because all the main difficulties and objections, lie equally against both. For the same Reason, he who disbelieves the immortality of the Soul, and a future State of Rewards and Punishments; cannot de-

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* Ita fit, ut si ab illa rerum Summa, quam superius comprehendimus, aberraveris, omnis ratio intereat, & ad nihilum omnia revertantur. Lactant. lib. 7.

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send to any effectual purpose, or enforce with any sufficient strength, the *obligations of Morality and natural Religion*; notwithstanding that they are indeed incumbent upon Men, from the very nature and reason of the things themselves. Then, he who gives up the obligations of Morality and natural Religion, cannot possibly have any just and worthy notion of the *moral Attributes* of God, or any true Sense of the nature and *necessary differences* of things: And he that once goes thus far, has no foundation left, upon which he can be sure of the *natural Attributes* or even of the *Existence* of God; Because, to deny what unavoidably follows from the Supposition of his Existence and natural Attributes, is in reality denying those natural Attributes and that Existence it self. On the contrary: He who believes the *Being and natural Attributes* of God, must of necessity (as has been shown in my former Discourse) confess his *moral Attributes* also. Next, he who owns and has just notions of the moral Attributes of God, cannot avoid acknowledging the *Obligations of Morality and natural Religion*. In like manner, he who owns the Obligations of Morality and natural Religion, must needs, to support those Obligations and make them effectual in practice, believe a *future State of Rewards and Punishments*: And finally, he who believes both the Obligations of natural Religion, and the certainty of a future State of Rewards and Punishments; has no manner of reason left, why he should reject the *Christian Revelation*, when proposed

proposed to him in its original and genuine Simplicity. Wherefore since those Arguments which demonstrate to us the Being and Attributes of God, are so closely connected with those which prove the reasonableness and certainty of the Christian Revelation, that there is Now no consistent Scheme of Deism left; all modern Deists being forced to shift from one Cavil to another, and having no fixt and certain set of Principles to adhere to; I thought I could no way better prevent their Evil Designs, and obviate all their different Shifts and Objections; than, by endeavouring, in the same method of reasoning by which I before demonstrated the *Being and Attributes of God*; to prove in like manner, by one direct and continued thread of Arguing, the reasonableness and certainty of the *Christian Revelation* also.

To proceed therefore to the proof of the *Propositions* themselves.

I. *The same necessary and eternal different Relations, that different Things bear one to another; and the same consequent Fitness or Unfitness of the Application of different things or different Relations one to another; with regard to which, the Will of God always and necessarily does determine it self, to choose to act only what is agreeable to Justice, Equity, Goodness and Truth, in order to the Welfare of the whole Universe; ought likewise constantly to determine the Wills of all subordinate rational Beings, to govern all their Actions by the same Rules, for the Good of the Publick, in their*

respective Stations. That is; these eternal and necessary differences of things make it fit and reasonable for Creatures so to act; they cause it to be their Duty, or lay an Obligation upon them, so to do; even separate from the consideration of these Rules being the positive Will or command of God; and also antecedent to any respect or regard, expectation or apprehension, of any particular private and personal Advantage or Disadvantage, Reward or Punishment, either present or future; annexed either by natural consequence, or by positive appointment, to the practising or neglecting those Rules.

The several Parts of this Proposition may be proved distinctly, in the following manner.

That there are eternal and necessary differences of things.

I. That there are Differences of things; and different Relations, Respects or Proportions, of some things towards others; is as evident and undeniable, as that one magnitude or number, is greater, equal to, or smaller than another. That from these different relations of different things, there necessarily arises an agreement or disagreement of some things with others, or a fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations one to another; is likewise as plain, as that there is any such thing as Proportion or Disproportion in Geometry and Arithmetick, or Uniformity or Difformity in comparing together the respective Figures of Bodies. Further; that there is a Fitness or Suitableness of certain Circumstances to certain Persons, and an Unsuitableness of others; founded in the nature

ture of things and the Qualifications of Persons; antecedent to all positive appointment whatsoever; Also, that from the different relations of different Persons one to another, there necessarily arises a fitness or unfitness of certain manners of Behaviour of some persons towards others: is as manifest, as that the Properties which flow from the Essences of different mathematical Figures, have different congruities or incongruities between themselves; or that in Mechanics, certain Weights or Powers have very different Forces, and different Effects one upon Another, according to their different Distances, or different Positions and Situations in respect of each other. For instance: That God is infinitely superior to Men; is as clear, as that Infinity is larger than a Point, or Eternity longer than a Moment: And it is as certainly Fit, that Men should honour and worship, obey and imitate God, rather than on the contrary in all their Actions endeavour to dishonour and disobey him; as it is certainly True, that they have an entire dependence on Him, and He on the contrary can in no respect receive any advantage from them; and not only so, but also that his Will is as certainly and unalterably just and equitable in giving his Commands, as his Power is irresistible in requiring submission to it. Again; it is a thing absolutely and necessarily Fitter in it self, that the Supreme Author and Creator of the Universe, should govern, order, and direct all things to certain constant and regular Ends; than that every thing should

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be permitted to go on at Adventures, and produce uncertain Effects merely *by chance* and in the utmost *confusion*, without any determinate View or Design at all. It is a thing manifestly *Fitter* in it self, that the All-powerful Governour of the World, should do always what is *Best* in the whole, and what tends most to the universal *Good* of the whole Creation; than that he should make the whole continually *miserable*; or than that to satisfy the unreasonable desires of any particular depraved Natures, he should at any time suffer the Order of the whole to be *altered* and *perverted*. Lastly, it is a thing evidently and infinitely more *Fit*, that any one particular *innocent and good Being*, should by the Supreme Ruler and Disposer of all things, be placed and preserved in an *easy and happy Estate*; than that without any fault or demerit of its own, it should be made *extremely, remedilessly, and endlessly miserable*. In like manner; in *Mens* dealing and conversing one with another; it is undeniably more *Fit*, absolutely and in the Nature of the thing it self, that all Men should endeavour to promote the *universal good and welfare of All*; than that all Men should be continually contriving the *ruin and destruction of All*. It is evidently more *Fit*, even before all positive Bargains and Compacts, that Men should deal one with another according to the known Rules of *Justice and Equity*; than that every Man for his own present advantage, should without scruple disappoint the most *reasonable and equitable Expectations* of his Neighbours,

and

and cheat and defraud; or spoil by violence, all others without restraint. Lastly, it is without dispute more *Fit* and reasonable in it self, that I should *preserve the Life* of an innocent Man that happens at any time to be in my Power; or deliver him from any imminent danger, tho' I have never made any promise io to do; than that I should suffer him to perish, or *take away his Life*, without any reason or provocation at all.

These things are so notoriously plain and self-evident, that nothing but the extreme ^{*The absurdity of those who deny the eternal and necessary differences of things.*} stupidity of Mind, corruption of Manners, or perverseness of Spirit, can possibly make any Man entertain the least doubt concerning them. For a Man endued with *Reason*, to deny the Truth of these things; is the very same thing, as if a Man that has the use of his *Sight*, should at the same time that he beholds the *Sun*, deny that there is any such thing as Light in the World; or as if a Man that understands *Geometry* or *Arithmetick*, should deny the most obvious and known *Proportions* of *Lines* or *Numbers*, and perversely contend that the *Whole* is not equal to all its parts, or that a *Square* is not double to a *Triangle* of equal base and height. Any Man of ordinary capacity, and unbiassed judgment, plainness and simplicity; who had never read, and had never been told, that there were Men and Philosophers, who had in earnest asserted and attempted to prove, that there is no natural and unalterable difference between *Good* and *Evil*; would at the first hearing be as hardly per-

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swaded to believe, that it could ever really enter into the Heart of any Intelligent Man, to deny all natural difference betwixt *Right* and *Wrong*; as he would be to believe, that ever there could be any *Geometer* who would seriously and in good earnest lay it down as a first Principle, that a *crooked Line* is as *strait* as a *right* one. So that indeed it might justly seem altogether a needless undertaking, to attempt to prove and establish the *eternal difference* of *Good* and *Evil*; had there not appeared certain Men, as Mr *Hobbs* and some few others, who have presumed, contrary to the plainest and most obvious reason of Mankind, to assert, and not without some Subtilty indeavoured to prove, that there is no such real Difference *originally, necessarily, and absolutely* in the Nature of Things; but that all Obligation of *Duty to God*, arises merely from his absolutely *irresistible Power*; and all *Duty towards Men*, merely from *positive Compact*; And have founded their whole Scheme of Politicks upon that Opinion. Wherein as they have contradicted the judgment of all the wisest and soberest part of Mankind, so they have not been able to avoid contradicting themselves also. For (not to mention now, that they have no way to show how *Compacts* themselves come to be obligatory, but by inconsistently owning an eternal original *Fitness* in the thing itself; which I shall have occasion to observe hereafter;) if there be *naturally and absolutely* in things themselves, no difference betwixt *Good* and *Evil*, *Just* and *Unjust*; then in
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the State of Nature, before any Compact be made, it is equally as good, just and reasonable, for one Man to destroy the Life of another, not only when 'tis necessary for his own Preservation, but also arbitrarily and without any * provocation at all, or *See Hobbs any appearance of advantage to himself; de Cive. c. as to preserve or save another Man's Life, 3. § 4. when he may do it without any hazard of his own. The consequence of which is, that not only the first and most obvious way for every particular Man to secure himself effectually, would be (as Mr Hobbs teaches) to endeavour to prevent and cut off all others; but also that Men might destroy one another upon every foolish and peevish or arbitrary Humour, even when they did not think any such thing necessary for their own preservation. And the effect of this practise must needs be, that it would terminate in the destruction of all Mankind. Which being undeniably a great and unsufferable Evil; Mr Hobbs himself confesses it reasonable, that, to prevent this Evil, Men should enter into certain Compacts to preserve one another. Now if the destruction of Mankind by each others Hands, be such an Evil, that, to prevent it, it was fit and reasonable that Men should enter into Compacts to preserve each other; then, before any such Compacts, it was manifestly a thing *unfit and unreasonable in it self*, that Mankind should all destroy one another. And if so, then for the same reason it was also *unfit and unreasonable*, antecedent to all Compacts, that *any one Man* should destroy another

another arbitrarily and without any provocation, or at any time when it was not absolutely and immediately necessary for the preservation of himself. Which is directly contradictory to Mr Hobbs's first Supposition,

* Ex his sequitur injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocum initur pactum. De Cive c. 3. § 4. where see more to the same purpose.

on, of * there being no natural and absolute difference betwixt Good and Evil, Just and Unjust, antecedent to positive Compact. And in like manner All others, who

upon any pretense whatsoever, teach that Good and Evil depend originally on the Constitution of positive Laws, whether Divine or Humane; must unavoidably run into the same Absurdity. For if there be no such thing as Good and Evil in the Nature of Things, antecedent to all Laws; then neither can any one Law be better than another; nor any one thing whatever, be more justly established and enforced by Laws, than the contrary; nor can there

† Manifestum est rationem nullam esse Lege prohibenti noxas tales, nisi agnoscunt tales Actus, etiam antecedenter ad ullam Legem, mala esse. Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. pag. 194.

* Nam stoliditas inveniri quæ inanior potest, quam mala esse nulla contendere, & tanquam malos perdere & condemnare peccantes? Arrov. advers. Gentes. Lib. 2.

† any reason be given, why any Laws should ever be made at all: But all Laws equally, will be either * arbitrary and tyrannical, or frivolous and needless; because the contrary might with equal reason have been established, if, before the making of the Laws, all things had been alike indifferent in their own Nature.

There is no possible way to avoid this Absurdity, but by saying, that out of things

in their own Nature absolutely indifferent, those are chosen by wise Governours to be made obligatory by Law, the practise of which they judge will tend to the publick benefit of the Community. But this is an expresse Contradiction in the very Terms. For if the practise of certain things tends to the publick benefit of the World, and the contrary would tend to the publick disadvantage; then those things are not in their own nature indifferent, but were good and reasonable to be practised before any Law was made, and can only for that very reason be wisely enforced by the Authority of Laws. Only here it is to be observed, that by the publick Benefit must

* not be understood the interest of any *one* particular Nation, to the plain injury or prejudice of the rest of Mankind; any more than the interest of *one* City or Family, in opposition to their

* Qui autem Civium rationem dicunt habendam, Externorum negant; dirimunt hi communem generis humani societatem; qua sublata, justitia funditus tollitur. Cic. de Offic. Lib. 3.

Neighbours of the same Country: But those things only are truly good in their own Nature, which either tend to the universal benefit and welfare of all Men, or at least are not destructive of it. The true State therefore of this Case, is plainly this: Some things are in their own nature *Good and Reasonable and Fit* to be done; such as *keeping Faith, performing equitable Compacts*, and the like; And these receive not their obligatory power, from any Law or Authority; but are only declared, confirmed, and enforced by penalties, upon such as would not perhaps

haps be governed by right Reason only. Other things are in their own nature *absolutely Evil*; such as *breaking Faith*, *refusing to perform equitable Compacts*, *cruelly destroying those who have neither directly nor indirectly given any occasion for any such treatment*, and the like; And these cannot by any Law or Authority whatsoever, be made fit and reasonable or excusable to be practised. Lastly, other things are in their own Nature *Indifferent*, that is, (not *absolutely* and *strictly* so; as such trivial Actions, which have no way any tendency at all either to the publick welfare or damage; For concerning *such* things it would be childish and trifling to suppose any Laws to be made at all, But they are) such things, whose tendency to the publick benefit or disadvantage, is either so *small* or so *remote*, or so *obscure and involved*, that the generality of People are not able of themselves to discern on which side they ought to act: And these things are made obligatory by the Authority of Laws: Though perhaps every one cannot distinctly perceive the reason and fitness of their being enjoined: Of which sort are many particular *penal Laws*, in several Countries and Nations. But to proceed.

An Answer
to the Ob-
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Variety of
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nions of
learned
Men, and
the Laws
of different
Nations,
concerning
right and
wrong.

The principal thing that can, with any colour of Reason, seem to countenance the Opinion of those who deny the natural and eternal difference of Good and Evil; (for Mr *Hobbs's* false Reasonings I shall hereafter consider by themselves;) is the *difficulty* there may sometimes be, to define exactly
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the bounds of right and wrong; the variety

* of Opinions that have obtained even among understanding and learned Men concerning certain Questions of just and unjust, especially in political Mat-

* Τα δὲ καὶ τὰ δίκαια καὶ τὰ ἀδίκαια ὅν τῃ πολιτικῇ σκοπεῖται, ποσούτην ἔχει διαφορὰν καὶ πλάτην, ὥστε δοκεῖν νόμον εἶναι, οὗτοι δὲ μὴ. Aristot. Ethic. lib. I. cap. 1.

ters; and the many contrary Laws that have been made in divers Ages and in different Countries, concerning these Matters. But, as in *Painting*, though two very different Colours, by diluting each other very slowly and gradually, may from the highest intenseness in either extreme, terminate in the midst insensibly, and so run one into the other, that it shall not be possible even for a skilful Eye to determine exactly where the one ends, and the other begins; and yet the Colours differ as much as can be, not in degree only but entirely in kind, as red and blue, or white and black: So, though it may perhaps be very difficult in some nice and perplexed Cases (which yet are very far from occurring frequently,) to define exactly the bounds of right and wrong, just and unjust; and there may be some latitude in the judgment of different Men, and the Laws of divers Nations; Yet *Right* and *Wrong* are nevertheless in themselves totally and essentially different; even altogether as much, as *White* and *Black*, *Light* and *Darkness*. The *Spartan Law* perhaps, which * permitted their Youth to

Steal; may, as absurd as * Κλέπειν νεόμυσο τας ἐλδύρας παῖδας δ, π πρὸς ὅντας. Plutarch. Apophthegmata Laconica.

it

it was, bear much dispute whether it was absolutely *Unjust* or no; because every Man having an absolute Right in his own Goods, it may seem that the Members of any Society may agree to transfer or alter their own Properties upon what conditions they shall think fit. But if it could be supposed that a Law had been made at *Sparta*; or at *Rome*, or in *India*, or in any other part of the World; whereby it had been commanded or allowed, that every Man might Rob by Violence, and Murther whomsoever he met with; or that *no Faith* should be kept with any Man, nor any *equitable Compact* performed; No Man, with any tolerable use of his Reason, whatever diversity of Judgment might be among them in other things, would have thought that such a Law could have authorized or excused, much less have justified such Actions, and have made them become good: Because it is plainly not in Mens Power to make *Falshood* be *Truth*, though they may alter the *Property of their Goods* as they please. Now if in *flagrant Cases*, the natural and essential difference between good and evil, right and wrong, cannot but be confessed to be plainly and undeniably evident; the difference betwixt them must be also essential and unalterable in all even the smallest and nicest and most intricate Cases, though it be not so easie to be discerned and accurately distinguished. For if from the difficulty of determining exactly the bounds of right and wrong in many *perplexed Cases*, it could truly be concluded that Just and

Unjust

Unjust were not essentially different by Nature, but only by positive Constitution and Custom; it would follow equally, that they were not really, essentially, and unalterably different, even in the *most flagrant Cases* that can be supposed. Which is an assertion so very absurd, that Mr *Hobbs* himself could hardly vent it without blushing, and discovering plainly by his shifting Expressions his secret Self-condemnation. There *Are* therefore certain *necessary and eternal differences* of things; and certain consequent *fitnesses or unfitnesses* of the application of different Things or different Relations one to another; not depending on any positive Constitutions, but founded unchangeably in the nature and reason of things, and unavoidably arising from the differences of the things themselves. Which is the first Branch of the general Proposition I proposed to prove.

2. Now what these eternal and unalterable Relations, Respects, or Proportions of things, with their consequent Agreements or Disagreements, Fitnesses or Unfitnesses, absolutely and necessarily *Are* in themselves; That also they appear to be, to the Understandings of all Intelligent Beings; except those only, who understand things to be what they are not, that is, whose Understandings are either very imperfect, or very much depraved. And by this Understanding or Knowledge of the natural and necessary relations, fitnesses, and proportions of things, the *Wills* likewise of all Intelligent Beings are constantly directed, and must

That the Will of God always determines it self to act according to the eternal reason of things.

needs

needs be determined to act accordingly; excepting those only, who *Will* things to be what they are not and cannot be; that is, whose *Wills* are corrupted by particular Interest or Affection, or swayed by some unreasonable and prevailing Passion. Wherefore since the *natural* Attributes of God, his infinite Knowledge, Wisdom, and Power, set *Him* infinitely above all possibility of being *deceived* by any *Errour*, or of being *influenced* by any *wrong Affection*; 'tis manifest *His* Divine Will cannot but always and necessarily determine it self to choose to Do what in the whole is absolutely Best and Fittest to be done; that is, to act constantly according to the eternal Rules of infinite Goodness, Justice and Truth. As I have endeavoured to show distinctly in my former Discourse, in deducing severally the *Moral* Attributes of God.

That all rational Creatures are obliged to govern themselves in all their Actions by the same eternal rule of Reason. 3. And now, that the same *Reason* of *Things*, with regard to which the Will of God always and necessarily *Does* determine it self to act in constant conformity to the eternal Rules of Justice, Equity, Goodness and Truth; *ought* also constantly to determine the Wills of all Subordinate Rational Beings, to govern all *Their* Actions by the same Rules; is very evident. For, as it is absolutely *impossible* in *Nature*, that God should be *deceived* by any *Errour*, or *influenced* by any *wrong Affection*: So it is very *unreasonable* and *blame-worthy* in *Practise*, that any *Intelligent* Creatures, whom God has made so far like unto himself, as to endue them with those excellent Faculties of *Reason* and *Will*,

Will, whereby they are enabled to *distinguish* Good from Evil, and to chuse the one and refuse the other; should either *negligently* suffer themselves to *be imposed upon and deceived* in Matters of Good and Evil, Right and Wrong; or *wilfully and perversly* allow themselves to be over-ruled by *absurd Passions* and *corrupt or partial Affections*, to act contrary to what they know is Fit to be done. Which two things, *viz. negligent Misunderstanding* or *wilful Passions and Lusts*, are, as I said, the only causes which can make a reasonable Creature act contrary to Reason, that is, contrary to the eternal Rules of Justice, Equity, Righteousness and Truth. For, was it not for these *inexcusable* corruptions and depravations; 'tis impossible but those same Proportions and Fittnesses of things, which have so much Weight and so much Excellency and Beauty in them, that the All-powerful Creator and Governour of the Universe, who has the absolute and uncontrollable Dominion of all things in his own Hands, and is accountable to none for what he does, yet thinks it no diminution of his Power to make this *Reason of Things* the unalterable Rule and Law of all his own Actions in the Government of the World, and does nothing by mere Will and Arbitrariness; 'tis impossible (I say,) if it was not for *inexcusable* corruption and depravation, but the same eternal *Reason of Things* must much more have Weight enough to determine constantly the Wills and Actions of all Subordinate, Finite, Dependent and Accountable Beings.

Proved
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original
Nature of
things.

For originally and in reality, it is as *natural* and (morally speaking) *necessary*, that the *Will* should be determined in every *Action* by the *Reason of the Thing*, and the *Right of the Case*; as it is *natural* and (absolutely speaking) *necessary*, that the *Understanding* should submit to a *demonstrated Truth*. And it is as absurd and blame-worthy, to *mistake negligently plain Right and Wrong*, that is, to *Understand* the Proportions of things in Morality to be what they are not; or *wilfully to act contrary* to known Justice and Equity, that is, to *will* things to be what they are not and cannot be; as it would be absurd and ridiculous for a Man in Arithmetical Matters, ignorantly to believe that *twice Two is not equal to Four*; or wilfully and obstinately to contend, against his own clear knowledge, that *the whole is not equal to all its Parts*. The only difference is, that *Assent* to a plain speculative *Truth*, is not in a Man's Power to with-hold; but to *Assent* according to the plain *Right and Reason* of things, this he may, by the natural Liberty of his Will, forbear. But the One he *ought* to do; and it is as much his plain and indispensable *Duty*; as the other he *cannot but do*, and it is the *Necessity* of his nature to do it. He that wilfully refuses to *Honour and Obey God*, from whom he received his Being, and to whom he continually owes his Preservation; is really guilty of an equal absurdity and inconsistency in Practice; as he that in Speculation denies the *Effect* to owe any thing to its Cause, or the *Whole* to be bigger than its Part.

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He that refuses to *deal with all Men equitably*, and with every Man as he desires *they* should deal with *him*: Is guilty of the very same unreasonableness and contradiction in one Case; as he that in another Case should affirm one *Number* or *Quantity* to be *equal* to another, and yet That other at the same time *not to be equal* to the first. Lastly, he that acknowledges himself obliged to the practise of certain *Duties* both towards *God* and towards *Men*, and yet takes no care either to preserve his own Being, or at least not to preserve himself in such a state and temper of Mind and Body, as may best enable him to perform those Duties; is altogether as inexcusable and ridiculous, as he that in any other Matter should *affirm* one thing, at the same time that he *denies* another, without which the former could not possibly be *true*; or *undertake* one thing, at the same time that he obstinately *omits* another, without which the former is by no means *practicable*. Wherefore all rational Creatures, whose Wills are not constantly and regularly determined, and their Actions governed, by right Reason and the necessary differences of Good and Evil, according to the eternal and invariable Rules of Justice, Equity, Goodness and Truth; but suffer themselves to be swayed by unaccountable arbitrary Humours, and rash Passions; by Lusts, Vanity and Pride; by private Interest, or present sensual Pleasures: These, setting up their own unreasonable Self-will in opposition to the Nature and Reason of things, endeavour

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(as much as in them lies) to make things be what they are not, and cannot be: Which is the highest Presumption and greatest Insolence, as well as the greatest Absurdity, imaginable; 'Tis acting contrary to that Understanding, Reason and Judgment, which God has implanted in their Natures on purpose to enable them to discern the difference between good and evil; 'Tis attempting to destroy that Order, by which the Universe subsists; 'Tis offering the highest affront imaginable to the Creator of all things, who made things to be what they are, and governs every thing himself according to the Laws of their several Natures. In a word; All wilful wickedness and perversion of Right, is the very same Insolence and Absurdity in *Moral matters*; as it would be in *Natural things*, for a Man to pretend to alter the certain Proportions of Numbers, to take away the Demonstrable Relations and Properties of Mathematical Figures, to make Light Darkness and Darkness Light, or to call Sweet Bitter and Bitter Sweet.

And from the Sense, that all even wicked Men unavoidably have, of their being under such an Obligation.

Further: As it appears thus from the *abstract and absolute* Reason and nature of things, that all rational Creatures Ought, that is, *are Obliged* to take care that their Wills and Actions be constantly determined and governed by the eternal rule of Right and Equity: So the certainty and universality of *that Obligation* is plainly confirmed, and the force of it particularly discovered and applied to every Man, by this; that in like manner as no one, who

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is instructed in Mathematicks, can forbear giving his Assent to every Geometrical Demonstration, of which he understands but the Terms, either by his own Study, or by having had them explained to him by others; so no Man, who either has patience and opportunities to examine and consider things himself, or has the means of being taught and instructed in any tolerable manner by others, concerning the necessary relations and dependencies of things; can avoid giving his Assent to the fitness and reasonableness of his governing all his Actions by the Law or Rule before-mentioned, even though his *Practise*, through the prevalence of Brutish Lusts, be most absurdly contradictory to that Assent: That is to say; by the Reason of his mind, he cannot but be compelled to own and acknowledge, that there is really such an *Obligation* indispensably incumbent upon him; even at the same time that in the *Actions of his Life* he is endeavouring to throw it off and despise it. For the Judgment and Conscience of a Man's own Mind, concerning the Reasonableness and Fitness of the thing, that his Actions should be conformed to such or such a Rule or Law; is the truest and formallest *obligation*; even more properly and strictly so, than any opinion whatsoever of the Authority of the Giver of a Law, or any regard he may have to its Sanction by Rewards and Punishments. For whoever acts contrary to this sense and conscience of his own mind, is necessarily self-condemned; and the greatest and strongest

of all obligations is that, which a Man cannot break through without condemning himself. The dread of superiour Power and Authority, and the Sanction of Rewards and Punishments; however indeed absolutely necessary to the government of frail and fallible Créatures, and truly the most effectual means of keeping Them in their Duty; is yet really in it self, only a *secondary and additional Obligation*, or *Interforcement* of the first. The original *Obligation* of all, (the ambiguous use of which Word as a *Term of Art*, has caused some perplexity and confusion in this matter,) is the eternal Reason of Things; That Reason which God himself, who has no Superior to direct him, and to whose Happiness nothing can be added nor any thing diminished from it, yet constantly *obliges himself* to govern the World by: And the more excellent and perfect any Creatures are, the more cheerfully and steddily are their Wills always determined by this *Supreme Obligation*, in conformity to the Nature, and in imitation of the most perfect Will of God. So far therefore as Men are conscious of what is right and wrong, so far they *Are* under an *Obligation* to act accordingly; And consequently That eternal Rule of Right, which I have been hitherto describing, 'tis evident *Ought* as indispensably to govern Mens Actions, as it *Cannot* but necessarily determine their Assent.

And from
the judg-
ment of
Mens con-
sciences up-
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Now that the Case is truly thus; that the eternal differences of Good and Evil, the unalterable rule of Right and Equity,

do

do necessarily and unavoidably determine the Judgment, and force the Assent of all Men that use any Consideration; is undeniably manifest from the universal *Experience* of Mankind. For no Man *willingly and deliberately* transgresses this Rule in any great and considerable Instance; but he acts contrary to the Judgment and Reason of his own Mind, and secretly reproaches himself for so doing: And no Man observes and obeys it *steddily*, especially in cases of *difficulty and Temptation*, when it interferes with any present Interest, Pleasure or Passion; but his own Mind commends and applauds him for his Resolution, in executing what his Conscience could not forbear giving its assent to, as just and right. And this is what St Paul means when he says, (Rom. 2. 14, 15.) that *when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves; which shew the work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another.*

It was a very wise Observation of Plato, *Of that* which he received from Soerates; that if ^{natural} you take a young Man, impartial and unprejudiced, one that never had any Learning, ^{knowledge} nor any Experience in the World; and ^{which Pla-} examine him about the ^{to thought} natural relations and ^{to be remi-} proportions of things, [or the moral differences of Good and Evil;] you may, only by asking him Questions, without teaching him any thing at all directly, cause him to express

The Evidences of Natural

press in his Answers just and adequate Notions of *Geometrical Truths*, [and true and exact determinations concerning *Matters of Right and Wrong*.] From whence *He* thought it was to be concluded, that all Knowledge and Learning is nothing but Memory, or only a recollecting upon every new occasion, what had been before known in a state of *Præ-existence*. And some others both Ancient and Moderns, have concluded that the *Idea's* of all first and simple Truths, either natural or moral, are *Innate* and originally *impressed* or *stamp'd* upon the Mind. In their inference from the Observation, the Authors of Both these Opinions seem to be mistaken. But thus much it proves unavoidably; That the differences, relations, and proportions of things both natural and moral, in which all unprejudiced Minds thus naturally agree, are certain, unalterable, and real *in the Things themselves*; and do not at all depend on the variable Opinions, Fancies, or Imaginations of Men prejudiced by Education, Laws, Customs or evil Practices: And also that the Mind of Man naturally and unavoidably gives its *Assent*, as to natural and geometrical Truths, so also to the moral differences of things, and to the fitness and reasonableness of the Obligation of the everlasting Law of Righteousness, whenever fairly and plainly propos'd.

*The most
profligate
Men, not
utterly in-
sensible of
the differ-
ence of
Good and
Evil.*

Some Men indeed, who, by means of a very evil and vitious Education, or through a long Habit of Wickedness and Debauchery, have extremely corrupted the Principles of their Nature, and have long

accu-

accustomed themselves to bear down their own Reason, by the force of Prejudice, Lust and Passion; that they may not be forced to confess themselves self-condemned, will confidently and absolutely contend that they do not really see any natural and necessary difference between what we call *Right* and *Wrong*, *Just* and *Unjust*; that the Reason and Judgment of their own Mind does not tell them they are under any such indispensable obligations, as we would endeavour to perswade them; and that they are not sensible they ought to be governed by any other Rule, than their own Will and Pleasure. But even these Men, the most profligate of all Mankind; however industriously they endeavour to conceal and deny their self-condemnation; yet cannot avoid making a discovery of it sometimes when they are not aware of it. For Example: There is no Man so vile and desperate, who commits at any time a Murder and Robbery, with the most unrelenting Mind; but

* would choose, if such a thing could be proposed to him, to obtain all the same profit or advantage, whatsoever it be that he aims at, *without* committing the Crime, rather than *with* it; even though he was sure to go unpunished for committing the Crime. Nay I believe, there is no Man, even in Mr *Hobbs's* State of Nature, and of Mr *Hobbs's* own Principles;

but

* Quis est enim, aut quis unquam fuit, aut avaritia tam ardenti, aut tam effrenatis cupiditatibus, ut eandem illam rem, quam adipisci scelere quovis velit, non multis partibus malie ad sese, etiam omni impunitate proposita, sine facinore, quam illo modo pervenire? *Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.*

but if he was equally assured of securing his main end, his Self-preservation, by either way; would choose to preserve himself rather *without* destroying all his Fellow-Creatures, than *with* it; even supposing all Impunity, and all other future conveniences of Life, equal in either case. Mr *Hobbs's* own Scheme, of Mens agreeing by Compact to preserve one another, can hardly be supposed without this; And this plainly evinces, that the Mind of Man unavoidably acknowledges a natural and necessary difference between Good and Evil, antecedent to all arbitrary and positive constitution whatsoever.

Mens natural Sense of eternal moral Obligations, proved from the Judgment they all pass upon the Actions of Others.

But the Truth of this, that the Mind of Man naturally and necessarily Assents to the eternal Law of Righteousness; may still better and more clearly and more universally appear, from the Judgment that Men pass upon each Others Actions, than from what we can discern concerning their Consciousness of their Own. For Men may dissemble and conceal from the World, the judgment of their own Conscience; nay, by a strange partiality, they may even impose upon and deceive *Themselves*; (For who is there, that does not sometimes allow himself, nay and even justify himself in that, wherein he condemns Another?) But Mens judgments concerning the Actions of Others, especially where they have no relation to *Themselves*, or repugnance to their Interest, are commonly impartial; and from this we may judge, what sense Men naturally have of the unalterable difference

ference of Right and Wrong. Now the Observation which every one cannot but make in this matter, is this; that *Virtue* and true *Goodness*, *Righreousness* and *Equity*, are things so truly noble and excellent, so lovely and venerable in themselves, and do so necessarily approve themselves to the Reason and Consciences of Men; that even those very Persons, who, by the prevailing Power of some Interest or Lust, are themselves drawn aside out of the Paths of Virtue, † can yet hardly ever forbear to give it its true Character and Commendation in Others. And this Observation holds true, not only in the generality of Vitious Men, but very frequently even in the worser sort of them, viz. those who persecute others for being better than themselves. Thus the Officers who were sent by the *Pharisees* to apprehend our Saviour, could not forbear declaring that *he spake as never Man spake*: Joh. 7. 46. And the Roman Governour, when he gave Sentence that he should be Crucified, could not at the same instant forbear openly declaring, that he *found no fault in him*. Joh. 18. Even in this case, Men cannot chuse but³⁸ think well of those persons, whom the *dominion of their Lusts* will not suffer them to imitate, or whom their *present Interest and the Necessity of their Worldly Affairs* compels them to discourage. They cannot but desire, that they themselves were the Men they are not; and wish with *Balaam*, that though they

† Placet suapte natura, adeoque; gratioſa virtus eſt, ut inſitum etiam ſi malis probare meliores. Senec. de Benef. l. 4.

they imitate not the life, yet at least they might die the death of the Righteous, and that there last end might be like theirs. And hence it is that Plato judiciously observes,

* Οὐ γὰρ ὅσον εὐίας ἀρετῆς ἀποφαινομένης τυγχάνουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ, ποσῶτον καὶ τὸ κρείττον τῆς ἀλλῆς οἱ πονηροὶ καὶ ἀχρηστοὶ δεῖον διπλῆ καὶ ἑνσυχον ὅτι καὶ τοῖσι κακοῖς, ὥστε πῶς πολλοὶ καὶ ἡ σφοδρὰ κακῶν, ἐν τοῖς λόγοις καὶ δόξαις διαίρυνται τὰς αἰεὶναις ἡ δὲ ἀνδρώπων καὶ τὰς χεῖρας.
Plato de Leg. lib. 12.

that, * even the worst of Men seldom or never make so wrong Judgments concerning Persons, as they do concerning Things; there being in Virtue an unaccountable and as it were divine force, which, whatever confusion Men endeavour to introduce in Things by their vitious Discourses and de-

bauched Practices, yet almost always compels them to distinguish right concerning Persons, and makes them admire and praise Just and Equitable and Honest Men. On the contrary; Vice and Injustice, Profaneness and Debauchery, are things so absolutely odious in their own Nature, that however they insinuate themselves into the practise, yet they can never gain over to themselves the judgment of mankind. They who Do evil, yet See and Approve what is good, and condemn in others, what they blindly allow in themselves; nay and very frequently condemn even themselves also, not without great disorder and uneasiness of Mind, in those very things wherein they allow themselves. At least, there is hardly any wicked Man, but when his own Case is represented to him under the person of another, will freely enough pass sentence against the wickedness he himself is guilty of; and with sufficient severity

severity, exclaim against all Iniquity. This shows abundantly, that all variation from the eternal rule of Right, is *absolutely and in the nature of the Thing it self* to be abhorred and detested; and that the unprejudiced mind of Man, as naturally *disapproves injustice* in moral matters, as in natural things it cannot but *dissent from falsehood, or dislike incongruities*. Even in reading the Histories of past and far distant Ages, where 'tis manifest we can have no concern for the *events of things*, nor prejudices concerning the *Characters of Persons*; Who is there, that does not praise and admire, nay highly esteem and in his imagination love (as it were) the Equity, Justice, Truth and Fidelity of some persons; and with the greatest Indignation and Hatred, detest the Barbarity, Injustice, and Treachery of others? Nay further; when the prejudices of corrupt Minds lie all on the side of Injustice; as when we have obtained some very great profit or advantage through another Man's Treachery or Breach of

Faith; yet * who is there, that upon that very occasion does not (even, to a proverb) dislike the *Person* and the *Action*, how much soever he may rejoice at the *Event*? But when we come our selves to *Suffer* by Iniquity, *Then* Where are all the Arguments and Sophistries, by which Unjust Men, while they are oppressing Others, would persuade themselves that they are not sensible of any natural difference betwixt good and evil? When

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* Quis Pullum Numitorem, Fregellanum proditorem, quanquam Reipublicæ nostræ profuit, non odit? Cic. de Finib. lib. 5.

it comes to be these Mens own case, to be oppressed by Violence, or over-reached by Fraud; where *Then* are all their Pleas against the eternal distinction of Right and Wrong? How, on the contrary, do they *Then* cry out for Equity, and exclaim against Injustice! How do they *Then* challenge and object against Providence, and think neither God nor Man severe enough, in punishing the Violators of Right and Truth! Whereas if there was no natural and eternal difference, between Just and Unjust; no Man could have any reason to complain of Injury, any other than what Laws and Compacts made so; which in innumerable cases will be always to be evaded.

*An Answer
to the Ob-
jection
drawn
from the
total igno-
rance of
some barba-
rous Nati-
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rality.*

There is but one thing, that I am sensible of, which can here with any Colour be objected against what has been hitherto said concerning the Necessity of the Mind's giving its Assent to the eternal Law of Righteousness; And that is, the *total Ignorance*, which some whole Nations are reported to lie under, of the nature and force of these moral Obligations. The Matter of Fact, is not very true: But if it was, 'tis certain there are more Nations and People totally ignorant of the plainest Mathematical Truths; as, of the proportion, for Example, of a *Square* to a *Triangle* of the same Base and Heighth: And yet these Truths are such, to which the Mind cannot but give its assent necessarily and unavoidably, as soon as they are distinctly proposed to it. All that this Objection proves therefore,

sup-

supposing the Matter of it to be true, is only this; not that the mind of Man, can ever dissent from the rule of Right; much less, that there is no necessary difference in nature between moral Good and Evil; any more than it proves, that there is no certain and necessary proportions of Numbers, Lines, or Figures: But this it proves only, that Men have great need to be taught and instructed in some very plain and easy, as well as certain Truths; and, if they be of importance, that they have need also to have them frequently inculcated, and strongly inforced upon them. Which is very true: And is (as shall hereafter be particularly made to appear) one good Argument for the reasonableness of expecting a *Revelation*.

4. Thus it appears *in general*, that the mind of Man cannot avoid giving its *Assent* to the eternal Law of Righteousness; that is, cannot but acknowledge the reasonableness and fitness of Mens governing all their Actions by the rule of Right or Equity; and also that this *Assent* is a *formal Obligation* upon every Man, actually and constantly to conform himself to that Rule. I might Now from hence deduce *in particular*, all the several Duties of Morality or Natural Religion. But because this would take up too large a portion of my intended Discourse, and may easily be supplied abundantly out of several late excellent Writers; I shall only mention the three great and principal Branches, from which all the other and smaller instances of duty do naturally

Of the principal Moral Obligations in particular.

The Evidences of Natural

turally flow, or may without difficulty be derived.

Of Piety,
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duty to-
wards
God.

First then, in respect of God, the Rule of Righteousness is; that we keep up constantly in our Minds, the highest possible Honour, Esteem, and Veneration for him; which must express it self in proper and respective influences upon all our Passions, and in the suitable direction of all our Actions: That we worship and adore Him, and Him alone, as the only Supreme Author, Preserver, and Governour of all Things: That we employ our whole Beings, and all our Powers and Faculties, in his Service, and for his Glory; that is, in encouraging the practise of universal Righteousness, and promoting the Designs of his divine Goodness amongst Men, in such way and manner as shall at any time appear to be his Will we should do it: And finally, that, to enable us to do this continually, we pray unto him constantly for whatever we stand in need of, and return him continual and hearty Thanks for whatever good things we at any time receive. There is no Congruity or Proportion, in the uniform disposition and correspondent order of any Bodies or Magnitudes; no Fitness or Agreement in the application of similar and equal Geometrical Figures one to another, or in the comparing them one with another; so visible and conspicuous; as is the Beauty and Harmony of the exercise of Gods several Attributes, meeting with suitable returns of Duty and Honour from all his rational Creatures throughout the Universe. The consideration of his Eternity and Infinity, his Knowledge and his Wisdom, necessarily com-
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mands our highest *Admiration*: The sense of his *Omnipresence*, forces a perpetual awful *Regard* towards him: His *Supreme Authority*, as being the *Creator, Preserver, and absolute Governour* of all things, obliges us to pay him all possible *Honour and Veneration, Adoration and Worship*; And his *Unity* requires, that it be paid to *Him alone*: His *Power and Justice*, demand our *Fear*: His *Mercy and Placableness*, encourage our *Hope*: His *Goodness*, necessarily excites our *Love*: His *Veracity and Unchangeableness*, secure our *Trust* in him: The sense of our having received our *Being and all our Powers from him*, makes it infinitely reasonable that we should employ our *whole Beings and all our Faculties in his Service*: The *Consciousness* of our continual *Dependence* upon him, both for our *Preservation and the Supply of every thing we want*; obliges us to constant *Prayer*: And every good thing we enjoy, the *Air we breath, and the Food we eat, the Rain from Heaven, and the fruitful Seasons, all the Blessings and Comforts of the present time, and the Hopes and Expectations we have of what is to come*; do * all demand our heartiest *Gratitude and Thanksgiving* to him. The *Suitableness and Proportion, the Correspondency and Connexion* of each of these things respectively, is as plain and conspicuous, as the shining of the Sun at

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* Quem vero Astrorum Ordines, quem dierum notitiamq; vicissitudines, quem mensium temperatio, quemq; ea quæ gignuntur nobis ad fruendum, non *Gratum* esse cogant; hunc Hominem omnino numerare qui de-
cer? Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

Ἐὶ γὰρ νῦν εἰχόμεν, ἀλλὰ
Noon.

πῶς οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμᾶς ποιεῖν καὶ κοινῇ καὶ
 ἰδίᾳ, ἢ ὑμνεῖν τὸ θεῖον, καὶ ἐν-
 φημεῖν, καὶ ἐπεξέρχεσθαι τὰς
 χάριτας; οὐκ ἔστι καὶ σκαπὸν-
 τας καὶ ἀρῶντας καὶ ἰδιόοντας
 αἰεὶν καὶ ὕμνον καὶ ἄς καὶ διδόν
 μέγας ὁ θεός, ὅτι ἡμῖν πα-
 ρέχειν ὄργανα πάντα δι' ὧν τὴν
 γὰρ ἐργασώμεθα; μέγας ὁ
 θεός ὅτι χεῖρας δίδωκεν, &c.
 Arrian. lib. 1. cap. 16.

Noon-day; And 'tis the
 greatest Absurdity and Per-
 verseness in the World,
 for Creatures indued with
 Reason, to attempt to break
 through and transgress this
 necessary Order and De-
 pendency of things. All
 Inanimate and all Irration-
 al Beings, by the Necessity

of their Nature, constantly obey the Laws
 of their Creation; and tend regularly to
 the Ends, for which they were appointed.
 How monstrous then is it, that Reasonable
 Creatures, merely because they are not
 Necessitated, should abuse that glorious
 privilege of Liberty, by which they are ex-
 alted in dignity above the rest of God's
 Creation, to make themselves the alone
 Unreasonable and disorderly part of the
 Universe! That a Tree planted in a fruit-
 ful Soil, and watered continually with the
 Dew of Heaven, and cherished constantly
 with the kindly warmth and benign in-
 fluence of the Sun-beams, should yet never
 bring forth either Leaves or Fruit; is not
 half so irregular and contrary to Nature,
 as that a Rational Being, created after the
 Image of God, and conscious of God's do-
 ing every thing for him, that becomes the
 Relation of an infinitely good and bounti-
 ful Creator to his Creatures; should yet ne-
 ver on his part make any return of those
 Duties, which arise necessarily from the
 Relation of a Creature to his Creator.

Secondly;

Secondly; In respect of our Fellow-creatures, the Rule of Righteousness is; that in particular we so deal with every Man, as in like Circumstances we could reasonably expect he should deal with us; and that in general we endeavour, by an universal Benevolence, to promote the welfare and happiness of all Men. The former Branch of this Rule, is Equity; the latter, is Love.

As to the former, viz. Equity: The Reason which obliges every Man in Practice, so to deal always with another, as he would reasonably expect that Others should in like Circumstances deal with Him; is the very same, as That which forces him in speculation to affirm, that if one Line or Number be equal to another, That other is reciprocally equal to It. Iniquity is the very same in Action, as Falsity or Contradiction in Theory; and the same cause which makes the one absurd; makes the other unreasonable. Whatever relation or proportion one Man in any Case bears to another; the same That Other, when put in like Circumstances, bears to Him. Whatever I judge reasonable or unreasonable, for another to do for Me; That, by the same Judgment, I declare reasonable or unreasonable, that I in the like Case should do for him. And to deny this either in Word or Action, is as if a Man should contend, that, tho' two and three are equal to five, yet five are not equal to two and three.

Wherefore * were not Men strangely and most unnaturally corrupted, by per-

* Nihil est unum uni tantum simile, tam par, quam Omnes inter nosmetipsos sumus
verse

mus. Quod si depravatio consuetudinum; si opinionum vanitas; non imbecillitatem animorum torqueret, & flesteret quocunq; capisset; sui nemo ipse tam similis esset, quam omnes sunt omnium, — & coleretur *Jus* æque ab omnibus. *Cic. de leg. lib. 1.*

verse and unaccountably false opinions, and monstrous evil customs and habits, prevailing against the clearest and plainest reason in the World: It would be impossible, that universal Equity should not be practised by all Mankind;

and especially among *Equals*, where the proportion of Equity is simple and obvious, and every Man's own case is already the same with all others, without any nice comparing or transposing of Circumstances: It would be as impos-

* Hoc exigit ipsa Naturæ ratio, quæ est lex divina & humana; cui patere qui velit, nunquam committeret ut alienum appetat, & id, quod alteri detraxerit, sibi assumat. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.*

sible, that * a Man, contrary to the eternal Reason of things, should desire to gain some small profit to Himself, by doing violence and damage to his Neighbour; as that he should be willing to be de-

prived of Necessaries himself, to satisfy the unreasonable Covetousness or Ambition of another: In a word; it would be impossible for Men not to be as much ashamed of *Doing Iniquity*, as they are of *Believing Contradictions*. In considering indeed the Duties of *Superiours* and *Inferiours* in various Relations, the proportion of Equity is somewhat more complex; But still it may always be deduced from the same Rule, of *doing as we would be done by*, if careful regard be had at the same time to the *difference of Relation*; That is, it in

COL.

considering what is fit for you to do to another, you always take into the account, not only every Circumstance of the *Action*, but also every Circumstance wherein the *Person* differs from you; And in judging what you would desire that another, if your Circumstances were transposed, should do to you; you always consider, not what any unreasonable Passion or private Interest would prompt you, but what impartial Reason would dictate to you to desire. For example: A *Magistrate*, in order to deal equitably with a *Criminal*, is not to consider what *Fear* or *Self-Love* would cause Him, in the Criminal's Case, to *desire*; but what *Reason* and the *publick Good* would oblige him to acknowledge was fit and just for him to expect. And the same Proportion is to be observed, in deducing the Duties of *Parents* and *Children*, of *Masters* and *Servants*, of *Governours* and *Subjects*, of *Citizens* and *Foreigners*; in what manner every Person is obliged by the Rule of Equity, to behave himself in each of these and all other Relations. In the regular and uniform Practise of all which Duties among all Mankind, in their several and respective Relations, through the whole Earth; consists that *Universal Justice*, which is the Top and Perfection of all Virtues: Which, if, as * *Plato* says, it could be represented visibly to mortal Eyes, would raise in us an inexpressible Love and Admiration of it:

* Δεινὸς ὃς ἂν παροῖχεν
 ἔρωτας, ἐπὶ τοῦτον ἐκείνης
 ἐπαργὲς ἰδῶλον παρ' ἑχέτο,
 ὣς. Plat. in Phædr.
 Quæ si oculis cerneretur,
 Which

mirabiles amores, ut ait *Plato*, excitaret sui. *Cic. de Offic. l. 1.*

Oculorum est in nobis sensus acerrimus, quibus sapientiam non cernimus; Quam illa ardentis amoris excitaret sui, si videretur! *Id. de fin. l. 2.*

* Ἡ Αὐτὴ μὲν ἐν τῇ διχρη-
σίνῃ, ἀρετὴν ὡς ὅτι πελεία.
μὲν ἔσθ' Ἐσπερος ἔσθ' Ἐὼς
ἐπεὶ σαυμαστὴν. Eth. lib. 5.
c. 3.

amores, ut ait Platonius.
 et sui. Cic. de Officiis.
 est in nobis sensus,
 mus, quibus sapientiam
 cernimus; Quamvis
 es amores excitaveretur!
 Id. de
 ἡ δὲ ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ
 πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς τελεία
 τῆς ψυχῆς εὐδαιμονία.
 Eth. lib. 5.

* Non enim mihi est *vita* mea utilior, quam animi talis affectio, neminem ut violenter commodi mei gratia. Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

† Καὶ τοῖς πᾶσι ζῶν, μέ-
γιστον μὴ κακόν, τ' ἐμμετάστα
χρόνον ἀθανάτων ὄντα, καὶ
κακιστὸν πάντα τὰ χρονο-
μῆκα ἀγαθόν, πάλιν διὰ το-
σούτου τ' καὶ ἀρετὴς ἀπάντης.
Plato de Leg. Lib. 2.

* Non enim mihi est vita mea utilior, quam animi talis affectio, neminem ut violentiam commodi mei gratia. Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

† Καὶ παρὰ τὸ ζῆν, μένουν μὴ κακῶ, τὸ εὖ πάντα χεῖρον ἀθάνατον ὄντα, καὶ κακούμενον πάντα τὰ χεῖρα μᾶλλον ἀγαθὰ, παλὺ δικαιοσύνης τὸ καὶ ἀρετῆς ἀπάσης. Plato de Leg. Lib, 2.

nor † all other possible Enjoyments in the World, put together, are of any value or esteem, in comparison of, or in competition with, that right temper and disposition of Mind, from which flows the practise of this universal Justice and Equity. On the contrary: Injustice and Iniquity, Violence, Fraud and Oppression; the universal confusion of right

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right and wrong, and the general neglect and contempt of all the Duties arising from Mens several Relations one to another; is the greatest and most unnatural corruption of God's Creation, that 'tis possible for depraved and rebellious Creatures to introduce: As they themselves, who practise iniquity most, and are most desirous to defend it, yet whenever it comes to be their own turn to suffer by it, are not very backward to acknowledge. To comprise this Matter therefore in one Word: What the Suns forsaking that equal course, which now, by diffusing gentle warmth and light, cherishes and invigorates every thing in a due proportion through the whole System; and on the contrary, his burning up, by an irregular and disorderly Motion, some of the Orbs with insupportable heat, and leaving others to perish in extream cold and darkness; would be to the *natural World*: That very same thing, Injustice, and Tyranny, Iniquity and all Wickedness, is to the *moral and rational* part of the Creation. The only difference, is this: That the one is an *obstinate and wilful* Corruption, and most *perverse* depravation of Creatures made after the Image of God; and a violating the *eternal and unalterable* Law or Reason of things, which is of the utmost Importance; Whereas the other would be only a revolution or change of the *arbitrary and temporary* frame of Nature.

Of univer-
sal mutual
Benevo-
lence.

The second Branch of the Rule of Righteousness with respect to our Fellow-creatures, I said, was *universal Love or Benevolence*; that is, not only the doing barely what is just and right, in our dealings with every Man; but also a constant endeavouring to promote in general, to the utmost of our power, the welfare and happiness of all Men. The Obligation to which duty also, may easily be deduced from what has been already laid down. For if (as has been before proved) there be a natural and necessary difference between Good and Evil; and that which is Good is fit and reasonable, and that which is Evil is unreasonable to be done; and that which is the greatest Good, is always the most fit and reasonable to be chosen; Then, as the Goodness of God extends it self universally over all his Works through the whole Creation, by doing always what is absolutely Best in the whole; so every rational Creature ought in its Sphere and Station, according to its respective powers and faculties, to do all the Good it can to all its Fellow-creatures: To which end, *universal Love and Benevolence* is as plainly the most direct, certain, and effectual

* Universaliter autem verum est, quod non certius fluxus juncti Lineam producit, aut additionum numerorum Summam, quam quod Benevolentia effectum præstat bonum. Cumberland de Leg. Naturæ. pag. 10.

Pari sane ratione [as in

means; as *in Mathematicks the *flowing of a Point*, is, to produce a *Line*; or in Arithmetick, the *Addition of Numbers*, to produce a *Summ*; or in Physicks, certain kinds of *Motions*, to preserve certain *Bodies*,

dies,

dies, which other kinds of Motions tend to corrupt. Of all which, the mind of Man is so naturally sensible, that, except in such Men whose Affections are prodigiously corrupted by most unnatural and habitual vitious practices, there is no Duty whatsoever, the performance whereof affords a Man so ample pleasure and satisfaction, and fills his mind with so comfortable a sense, of his having done the greatest Good he was capable to do, of his having best answered the ends of his Creation, and nearliest imitated the Perfections of his Creator, and consequently of his having fully complied with the highest and principal Obligations of his Nature; as the performance of this one Duty, of *universal Love and benevolence*, naturally affords. But further: The Obligation to this great Duty, may also otherwise be deduced from the *Nature of Man*, in the following manner. Next to that natural *Self-love*, or Care of his own Preservation, which every one necessarily has in the first place for *himself*; there is in all Men a certain natural Affection

Arithmetica operationibus] Doctrinae Moralis veritas fundatur in immutabili cohaerentia inter Felicitatem Summam quam hominum vires assequi valent, & Affectus benevolentiae universalis. Id. ibid. pag. 23.

Eadem est mensura Boni Malique, quae mensura est veri falsiq; in propositionibus pronuntiantibus de efficacia Motuum ad rerum aliarum conservationem & corruptionem facientium. *Id. pag. 30.*

* Angusta admodum est circa nostra tantummodo commoda, Latitiae materia; sed eadem erit amplissima, si aliorum omnium Felicitas cordi nobis sit. Quippe haec ad illam, eandem habebit proportionem, quam habet immensa Beatitudo Dei, totiusq; humani generis, ad curtam illam fictae felicitatis suppellectilem, quam uni homini, ei; invidio & malevolo, fortunae bona possint suppeditare, *Id. ibid. pag. 214.*

fection for their *Children and Posterity*, who have a dependence upon them; and for their near *Relations and Friends*, who have an intimacy with them. And because the Nature of Man is such, that they cannot live comfortably in independent Families, without still further Society and Commerce with each other; therefore they naturally desire to increase their dependencies, by multiplying Affinities; and to enlarge their friendships, by mutual good offices; and to establish Societies, by a communication of Arts and Labour: Till

* In omni honesto, nihil est tam illustre, nec quod latius pateat, quam conjunctio inter homines hominum, & quasi quædam societas & communicatio utilitatum, & ipsa Charitas generis humani, quæ nata a primo sætu, quo a procreatoribus nati diliguntur, — serpit sensim foras, cognationibus primum, — deinde totius complexu gentis humane. Cic. de Finib. lib. 5.

* by degrees the Affection of *single Persons*, becomes a Friendship of *Families*; and this enlarges it self to a Society of *Towns and Cities* and *Nations*; and terminates in the agreeing Community of all Mankind. The Foundation, Preservation, and Perfection of which universal Friendship or Society, is *mutual Love and Benevolence*; And nothing hin-

ders the World from being actually put into so happy a state, but perverse Iniquity and unreasonable want of mutual Charity. Wherefore since men are plainly so constituted by Nature, that they stand in need of each others assistance to make themselves easy in the World; and are fitted to live in Communities; and Society is absolutely necessary for them; and mutual Love and Benevolence is the only possible

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possible means to establish this Society in any tolerable and durable manner; and in this respect * all Men stand upon the same level, and have the same natural wants and desires, and are in the same need of each others help, and are equally capable of enjoying the benefit and advantage of Society; 'Tis evident every Man is bound by the Law of his Nature, as he is also prompted by the † Inclination of his uncorrupted Affections, to * look upon himself as a part and member of that one universal body or community, which is made up of all Mankind; to think himself || born to promote the publick good and welfare of all his Fellow-creatures; and consequently obliged, as the necessary and only effectual means to that End, to † embrace them All with universal Love and Benevolence; So that he* cannot, without acting contrary to the Reason of his own mind, and transgressing the plain and known Law of his Being, do

* Nihil est unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam omnes inter nosmetipsos sumus. Quod nisi depravatio, &c; sui nemo ipse tam similis esset, quam omnes sunt omnium. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

† Impellimur autem Natura, ut prodesse velimus quamplurimis. *Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.*

* Hominem esse quasi partem quandam civitatis & universi generis humani, eumq; esse conjunctum cum hominibus Humana quadam Societate. *Cic. Quest. Academic. lib. 1.*

|| Homines hominum causa sunt generati, ut ipsi inter se alii aliis prodesse possint. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.*

Ad tuendos conservandosq; homines hominem natum esse. *Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.*

† Omnes inter se naturali quadam indulgentia & benevolentia contineri, *Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

* Ex quo efficitur, hominem naturæ obediens, homini nocere non posse. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.*

willingly

willingly any hurt and mischief to any

|| Οὐτε ἀγαθὸν ἀνταδιδόναι δεῖ,
ἀλλ' ὅτι καὶ τοῖς κακοῖς ἵδιαις ἀν-
τιποιεῖν ἵδιον ἐστὶν ἅπασι
ἡμῶν ἀνθρώπων. Plato in Cri-
tone.

Man; no, || not even to those who have first injured him; but ought, for the publick benefit, to endeavour to appease with gentleness, rather than ex-

asperate with retaliations; and finally, to comprehend all in one Word, (which is the top and compleat Perfection of this

great Duty,) ought to † Love all others as himself.

† Tum illud efficit, quod quibusdam incredibile videatur, sit autem necessarium, ut nihilo sese plus quam alterum diligat. Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

This is the Argumentation of that great Master, Cicero; whose knowledge and understanding of the true state of things, and of

the original Obligations of humane Nature, was as much greater than Mr Hobbs's; as his helps and advantages to attain that knowledge, were less.

Of Sobriety, or Mens Duty towards themselves; and of the Unlawfulness of Self-murder.

Thirdly, with respect to our Selves, the Rule of Righteousness is; that every Man preserve his own Being, as long as he is able; and take care to keep himself at all times in such temper and disposition both of Body and Mind, as may best fit and enable him to perform his Duty in all other Instances: That is; he ought to bridle his Appetites, with Temperance; to govern his Passions, with Moderation; and to apply himself to the business of his present Station in the World, whatsoever it be, with Attention and Contentment. That every Man ought to preserve his own Being as long as he is able, is evident; because what he is not himself the Author and

and Giver of, he can never of himself have just Power or Authority to take away. He that sent us into the World, and alone knows for how long time he appointed us our Station here, and when we have finished all the business he intended we should do; can alone judge when it is fit for us to be taken hence, and has alone Authority to dismiss and discharge us. This reasoning has been admirably applied by *Plato*, *Cicero*, and others of the best Philosophers. So that though the *Stoicks* of old, and the *Deists* of late, have in their ranting Discourses, and some few of them in their rash Practise, contradicted it; yet they have never been able, with any colour of reason, to answer or evade the force of the Argument: Which indeed, to speak the Truth, has been urged by the fore-mentioned Philosophers, with such singular Beauty, as well as invincible Strength, that it seems not capable of having any thing added to it. Wherefore I shall give it you only in some of their own Words.

We Men, (says * *Plato* in the person of *Socrates*,) are all, by the appointment of God, in a certain Prison or Custody, which we ought not to break out of, and run away. We are as Servants, or as Cattle, in the hand of God: And would not any of Us, saith he, if one of our Servants should, contrary to our direction, and to escape

* Εν πρὶν οὐδέ τι ἐσμὲν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, καὶ ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἑαυτὸν ἐκ ταύτης λύειν, ἐὰν ἀποδιδράσκῃ. — Θεὸς ἔτι ἡμῶν τὰς ἐπιμελειὰς, καὶ ἡμᾶς τὰς ἀνθρώπους ἐν ᾧ κτήματων τοῖς θεοῖς ἔστι. — Οὐκ ἔν σοι ἄν. ἢ σου τῆς κτημάτων ἐστὶ αὐτὸ ἑαυτὸ ἀποκλινέσθαι, μὴ συμψεύδῃς σε ὅτι βέλει αὐτὸ τεύχεον, χαλεπῶν οἱ ἀν' αὐτῷ, καὶ εἰ πᾶσι ἔχοις πτωχεύειν, πτωχεύῃς ἄν. *Plato* in *Phaed.*

out of our Service, kill himself; think we had just reason to be very angry, and, if it was in our Power, punish him for it? So

* Verat enim dominans ille in nobis Deus, injussu hinc nos suo demigrare. Cum vero causam justam Deus ipse dederit, nã ille medius fidius vir sapiens, latus ex his tenebris in lucem illam excesserit; nec tamen illa vincula carceris ruperit; leges enim verant; sed tanquam a magistratu, aut ab aliqua potestate legitima, sic a Deo evocatus, atq; emissus exierit. Cic. Tusc. Quest. lib. 1.

Sorrow and Darknes into Light; yet he will not be in such hast, as to break his Prison contrary to Law; but will go when God calls him, as a Prisoner when dismissed by the Magistrate or lawful Power. Again;

* Illud breve vitæ reliquum nec avide appetendum senibus, nec sine causa deserendum est; Veratq; Pythagoras, injussu Imperatoris, id est, Dei, de praesidio & statione vitæ decedere. Cic. de Senect.

it is as unlawful for a Man, without the command of God, to remove himself out of the World; as for a Soldier to leave his Post without his General's Order. And in another Place: Unless That God,

† Nisi enim Deus is, cujus hoc Templum est omne quod conspicis, istis te corporis

likewise Cicero: God, says * he, the Supreme Governour of all things, forbids us to depart hence without his Order: And though, when the divine Providence does it self offer us a just occasion of leaving this World, (as when a Man chooses to suffer Death rather than commit Wickedness,) a wise Man will then indeed depart joyfully, as out of a place of

Life, saith * he, which old Men have a prospect of, they ought neither too eagerly to desire, nor yet on the contrary unreasonably and discontentedly deprive themselves of it: For, as Pythagoras teaches,

For, as Pythagoras teaches, it is as unlawful for a Man, without the command of God, to remove himself out of the World; as for a Soldier to leave his Post without his General's Order. And in another Place: Unless That God, saith † he, whose Temple and Palace this whole World

is, discharges you himself out of the Prison of the Body; you can never be received to his Favour. Wherefore you, and all pious Men, ought to have patience to continue in the Body, as long as God shall please, who sent us hither; and not force your selves out of the World, before he calls for you; least you be found Deserters of the Station appointed you by God. And, to mention no more; That excellent Author, *Arrian*: Wait, saith * he, the good pleasure of God: When He signifies it to be his Will, that you should be discharged from this Service, then depart willingly; But in the mean time, have Patience and tarry in the place where he has appointed you: Wait and do not hurry your selves away wilfully and unreasonably. The Objections, which the Author of the *Defense of Self-murder*, prefixed to the *Oracles of Reason*, has attempted to advance against this Argument; are so very weak and childish, that 'tis evident he could not, at the time he wrote them, believe in earnest that there was any force in them: As when he says, that the reason why it is not lawful for a Centinel to leave his Station without his Commanders Order, is because he entred into the Service

custodiis liberaverit; huc tibi aditus patere non potest.

—— Quare & tibi & piis omnibus retinendus est animus in custodia corporis; nec injussu ejus, a quo ille est nobis datus, ex hominum vira migrandum est; ne munus humanum assignatum a Deo defugisse videamini. *Cic. Somn. Scipion.*

* Ἐκ δὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς ὅταν ἐκείνῳ σημάνῃ καὶ ὑπολύσῃ ὑμᾶς ταύτης καὶ ὑπηρεσίας, τότε ὑπολύειτε πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐπὶ ὃ ὅτι παρήντη ἀνὰ χάριν ἐνοικούντας ταύτῃ πῶς χάριτος, οἷς ἡμεῖς ἐκείνῳ ὑμᾶς ἐπαξεν. Μείνατε, μὴ ἀλογίως ἀπὸ λήθης. *Arrian. lib. 1.*

by his own Consent; as if God had not a just Power to lay any Commands upon his Creatures, without *their own Consent*: Or when he says, that there are many lawful ways to seek Death in; as if, because a Man may lawfully venture his Life in many publick Services, therefore it was lawful for him directly to throw it away upon any foolish discontent. But the Author of that Discourse has since been so just, as to confess his Folly, and retract it publickly himself. Wherefore to proceed: For the same reason, that a Man is obliged to preserve his own *Being* at all; he is bound likewise to preserve himself, as far as he is able, in the right Use of all his *Faculties*; that is, to keep himself constantly in such temper both of Body and Mind, by regulating his Appetites and Passions, as may best fit and enable him to perform his Duty in all other instances. For, as it matters not whether a Soldier deserts his Post, or by Drunkenness renders himself incapable of performing his Duty in it: So for a Man to disable himself by any Intemperance or Passion, from performing the necessary Duties of Life; is, at least for that time, the same thing as depriving himself of Life. And neither is This all. For great Intemperance and ungoverned Passions, not only incapacitate a Man to perform his Duty; but also expose him to run headlong into the commission of the greatest Enormities: There being no Violence or Injustice whatsoever, which a Man who has deprived himself

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of his Reason by Intemperance or Passion, is not capable of being tempted to commit. So that all the additional Obligations which a Man is any way under, to forbear committing the most flagrant Crimes; lie equally upon him to govern his Passions and restrain his Appetites: without doing which, he can never secure himself effectually, from being betrayed into the commission of all Iniquity. This is indeed the great difficulty of Life, to subdue and conquer our unreasonable Appetites and Passions: But it is absolutely necessary

to be done; And * 'tis moreover the bravest and most glorious Conquest in the World. Lastly; for the same Reason that a Man is obliged not to depart wilfully out of this Life, which is the general

* Οἱ μὲν ἀεὶ νίκης ἐνεχέω
πάλης καὶ δρόμων καὶ ἄλλ' αἰσχυ-
ρων, ἐβόλυσαν ἀπεχέσθαι. —
Οἱ δὲ ἡμέτεροι παῖδες, ἀδυνα-
τήσουσιν καρτερεῖν, πολὺ χαλ-
λίον ἐνεχέω νίκης; Plato de
Leg. lib. 8.

Station that God has appointed him; he is obliged likewise to attend the Duties of that particular Station or condition of life, whatsoever it be, wherein Providence has at present placed him; with diligence, and contentment: Without being either uneasy and discontented, that others are placed by Providence in different and superior Stations in the World; or so extremely and unreasonably solicitous to change his State for the future, as thereby to neglect his present Duty.

From these three great and general Branches, all the smaller and more particular

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ticular Instances of Moral Obligations, may (as I said) easily be deduced.

The Law of Nature 5. And now this, (This eternal Rule of Equity, which we have been hitherto describing,) is that right Reason, which makes the principal Distinction betwixt Man and Beasts. This is that Law of Nature, which (as Cicero excellently expresses it) is * of universal extent, and everlasting duration; which can neither be wholly abrogated, nor repealed in any part of it, nor have any Law made contrary to it, nor be dispensed with by any Authority: Which † was in force, before ever any Law was written, or the foundation of any City or Commonwealth was laid: Which ‡ was not invented by the Wisdom of Men, nor established by the Authority of any People; but its Obligation was from eternity, and the force of it reaches throughout the Universe: Which * being founded in the Nature and Reason of Things, did not then begin to be a Law, when it was first written and enacted by Men; but is of the same original with the eternal Reasons of

* Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quæ vocet ad officium jubendo; vetando, a fraude deterreat. — Huic legi nec obrogari fas est, neq; derogari ex hac aliquid licet, neq; tota abrogari potest. Nec vero aut per Senatum, aut per populum solvi hac lege possumus, Cic. de Repub. lib. 3. fragment.

† Lex quæ seculis omnibus ante nata est, quam scripta lex ulla, aut quam omnino civitas constituta. Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.

‡ Legem, neq; hominum ingeniis excogitatam, neq; scitum aliquod esse populum, sed æternum quiddam, quod universum mundum regat. Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

* Nec si regnante Tarquinio, nulla erat Roma scripta lex de stupris, idcirco non contra illam legem sempiternam Sextus Tarquinius vim Lucretiæ attulit. Erat enim ratio profecta a rerum natura, & ad recte faciendum impellens, & a delicto avocans: quæ non tum deniq; incipit lex esse, cum scripta est, sed tum cum orta est: orta autem simul est cum mente divina. Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

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Proportions of things, and the Perfections or Attributes of God himself; So that if there was no law at Rome against Rapes, at that time when Tarquin offered violence to Lucretia, it does not therefore follow that he was any whit the more excusable, or that his Sin against the eternal Rule of Equity was at all the less heinous. This is that Law of Nature, † to which the Reason

of all Men every where as naturally and necessarily assents, as all Animals conspire in the pulse and motion of their Heart and Arteries, or as all Men agree in their judgment concerning the whiteness of Snow, or the Brightness of the Sun. For though in some nice Cases, the bounds of right and wrong may indeed (as was before observed) be somewhat difficult to determine; and in some few even plainer Cases, the Laws and Customs of certain barbarous Nations may be contrary one to another; (which some have been so weak as to think a just Objection against there being any natural difference between Good and Evil at all;) yet in reality,

this * no more disproves the natural Assent of all Mens unprejudiced Reason to the Rule of Right and Equity, than the difference of most Mens Countenances in general, or the deformity of some few Monsters in particular, proves

† In judicio de bonitate harum rerum, æque omnes ubiq; conveniunt, ac omnia Animalia in motu Cordis & Arteriarum pulsu, aut omnes homines in opinione de nivis candore & splendore Solis. Cumberland de Leg. Natura, pag. 167.

pag. 49;

* Hoc tamen non magis tollit consensum hominum de generali Natura Boni, ejusq; partibus vel speciebus præcipuis, quam levis vul-tuum diversitas tollit convenienciam inter homines in communi hominum definitione, aut similitudinem inter

that

eos in partium principalium conformatione & usu. Nulla gens est, quæ non sentiat *afflus deum diligendi*, &c. Nulla gens non sentit *gratitudinem erga parentes* & *benefactores* toti humano generi salutarem esse. Nulla temperamentorum diversitas facit ut quisquam non bonum esse sentiat universis, ut singulorum innocentium vitæ, membra, & libertas conserventur. *Cumberland. de Legib. Naturæ, pag. 166.*

Nec, enim an honorifice de Deo sentiendum sit, neq; an sit amandus, timendus, colendus, dubitari potest. Sunt enim hæc Religionum per omnes gentes communia. Deum eo ipso, quod homines fecerit rationales, hoc illis præcepisse, & cordibus omnium insculpisse, ne quicquam cuiquam faceret, quod alium sibi facere iniquum diceret. *Hobbs de Homine, cap. 14. [Inconsistently enough with his own Principles.]*

* Nam ut vera & falsa, ut consequentia & contraria, sua sponte, non aliena, judicantur: sic constans & perpetua ratio vitæ, quæ est virtus; itemq; inconstantia, quæ est vitium; sua natura probatur. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

† Quod vere dicimus, etiamsi a nullo laudetur, laudabile esse natura. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.*

that there is no general Likeness or Uniformity in the Bodies of Men: For, whatever difference there may be in some particular Laws, 'tis certain that as to the main and principal Branches of Morality, there never was any Nation upon Earth, but owned, that to Love and Honour God, to be grateful to Benefactors, to perform Equitable Compacts, to preserve the Lives of innocent and harmless Men, and the like, were things fitter and better to be practised, than the contrary. In fine: This is that Law of Nature, which being founded in the eternal Reason of things, is as absolutely unalterable, as natural Good and Evil, as * Mathematical or Arithmetical Truths, as Light and Darkness, as Sweet and Bitter: The † Observance of which, though no Man should commend it, would yet be truly commendable in it self: Which to suppose depending on the opinions of Men, and the customs of Nations; that is, to suppose that What

shall be accounted the Virtue of a Man depends merely on Imagination or Custom

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Custom to determine; is * as absurd, as it would be to affirm, that the Fruitfulness of a Tree or the Strength of a Horse, depends merely on the Imagination of those who judge of it. In a word; Which, if its had its original from the Authority of Men, and could be changed by it; then † all the commands of the cruellest and most barbarous Tyrants in the World, would be as just and equitable, as the wisest Laws that ever were made; and * to murder Men without distinction, to confound the Rights of all Families by the grossest Forgeries, to rob with unrestrained Violence, to break Faith continually, and defraud and cheat without reluctance, might by the decrees and ordinances of a mad Assembly be made lawful and honest. In which matters if any Man thinks that the Votes and Suffrages of Fools have such Power, as to be able to change the Nature of Things; why do they not likewise decree (as Cicero admirably expresses himself,) that poisonous things may become wholesome; and that any other thing,

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* Hæc autem in opinione existimare, non in natura ponere, dementis est. Nam nec Arboris nec Equi virtus, quæ dicitur, in opinione sita est, sed in natura. Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

† Jam vero stultissimum illud, existimare omnia iusta esse, quæ scita sint in populorum institutis aut legibus. Etiamne siquæ sunt tyrannorum leges, si triginta illi Athenis leges imponere voluissent, aut si omnes Athenienses delectarentur tyrannicis legibus, num idcirco hæc leges iustæ haberentur? Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

* Quod si populorum iussis, si principum decretis, si sententiis iudicum, jura constituerentur; jus esset latrocinari, jus adulterare, jus testamenta falsa supponere, si hæc suffragiis aut scitis multitudinis probarentur. Quæ si tanta potentia est stulcorum sententiis atque iussis, ut eorum suffragiis rerum natura vertatur; cur non sanciant, ut quæ mala perniciosaq; sunt, habeantur pro bonis ac salutaribus? aut cur, cum jus ex injuria lex facere possit, bonum eadem facere non possit ex malo? Id. ibid.

which

which is now destructive of Mankind, may become preservative of it?

Eternal moral Obligations, antecedent in some respect, even to this consideration, of their being the Will and Command of God himself.

it; so its obligation, primarily and originally, is * antecedent al-

* Virtutis & Vitiolorum, sine ulla Divina ratione, grave ipsius conscientiae pondus est. Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 3.

† Deniq; nequis obligationem Legum naturalium arbitrariam & mutabilem a nobis fingi suspicetur; hoc adjiciendum censui; Virtutum exercitium, habere rationem medii necessarij ad finem, (seposita consideratione Imperij Divini,) manente rerum natura tali qualis nunc est. Hoc autem ita intelligo, uti agnoscunt pleriq; omnes, Additionem duarum unitatum duabus prius positis, necessario constituere numerum quaternarium; aut uti praxes geometrica & mechanica, problemata proposita solvunt immutabiliter; adeo ut nec sapientia nec voluntas Divina cogitari possit quicquam in contrarium constituere posse. Cumberland de Legib. Natura, pag. 231.

* Τὸ ὁραώμενον, ὃ δὲ ὁρᾷ οὐ γὰρ ἔστι, διὰ τὸ τοῦ ὁραῖναι ἀλλὰ τὴν αὐτῆς δόξαν ὁραῖναι, διὰ τὸ τοῦ ὁραώμενον. [Note, these Words are by

6. Further yet: As this Law of Nature is infinitely superiour to all Authority of Men, and independent upon

to even to this Consideration, of its being the positive Will or Command of God himself. For, † as the Addition of certain Numbers, necessarily produces a certain Sum; and certain Geometrical or Mechanical Operations, give a constant and unalterable Solution of certain Problems or Propositions: So in moral Matters, there are certain necessary and unalterable respects or relations of Things, which have not their Original from arbitrary and positive Constitution, but are of eternal necessity in their own Nature. For example, * As in Matters of Sense, the reason why a thing is Visible, is not because 'tis Seen; but it is therefore Seen, because 'tis Visible: So in matters of natural Reason and Morality, that which is Holy and Good

(as

(as Creatures depending upon and worshipping God, and practising Justice and Equity one with another, and the like,) is not therefore Holy and Good, because it is commanded to be done; but is therefore commanded by God, because it is Holy and Good. The Existence indeed of the Things themselves, whose proportions and relations we consider, depend entirely on the mere arbitrary Will and good Pleasure of God; who can create things when he pleases, and destroy them again when ever he thinks fit: But when things are Created, and so long as it pleases God to continue them in Being; their Proportions, which are abstractly of Eternal Necessity, are also in the Things themselves absolutely unalterable. Hence God himself, though he has no Superiour, from whose Will to receive any Law of his Actions; yet disdains not to observe the Rule of Equity and Goodness, as || the Law of all his Actions in the Government of the World; and condescends to appeal even to Men, for the Equity and Righteousness of his Judgments. To this Law, the infinite Perfections of his Divine Nature make it necessary for him (as has been before proved,) to have constant regard; And (as a learned Prelate of our own

Ficinus ridiculously translated, videtur and visum est.] Οὐκ ἔστι τὸ δόσιον, διότι δόσιον ἔστι, φιλοῦται ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλ' ἐκ ὅτι φιλοῦται, διὰ τοῦ δόσιον ἔστι. Plato in Euthyphr.

|| Καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετὴ ἔστι τοῦ καλοῦ πάντων ὥστε καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετὴ ἀνθρώπου καὶ θεοῦ. Origen Advers. Celsum. lib. 4.

Exek. 18.

pag. 47, 48.

* Dictamina Divini Intellectus sanciantur in Leges apud ipsum valituras, per immutabilitatem suarum perfectionum. *Cumberland de Leg. Natura. pag. 343.*

Solebam ipse quidem, cum aliis plurimis, antequam dominii jurisque omnis originem universaliter & distincte considerassem, *dominium Dei*, in *Creationem* velut integram ejus *originem*, resolvere. Verum quoniam, &c. — in hanc tandem concessi sententiam, *dominium Dei* esse jus vel potestatem ei a sua Sapientia & Bonitate, velut a *Lege*, datam ad regimen eorum omnium quæ ab ipso unquam creata fuerint, vel creabuntur. — Nec poterit quisquam merito conqueri, *dominium dei* intra nimis angustos limites hac explicatione coerceri; qua hoc unum dicitur, illius nullam partem consistere in potestate quicquam faciendi contra finem optimum, Bonum commune. *Idem pag. 345, 346.*

Contra autem, *Hobbiana* resolutio *dominii Divini* in *potentiam ejus irresistibilem*, adeo aperte ducit ad, &c. — ut mihi dubium non sit, illud ab eo fictum fuisse, Deoque attributum, in eum tantum finem, ut juri suo omnium in omnia patrocineretur. *Id. pag. 344.*

Nos e contrario, fontem indicavimus, e quo demonstrari potest, *Justitiam universalem*, omnemque adeo *Virtutem moralem*, quæ in Rectore requiritur, in Deo præ cæteris refulgere, eadem plane metodo, qua homines ad eas excolendas obligari ostendimus. *Id. pag. 347.*

* has excellently shown,) not barely his infinite Power, but the Rules of this eternal Law, are the true Foundation and the Measure of his Dominion over his Creatures. Now for the same Reason that God, who hath no Superior to determine him, yet constantly directs all his own Actions by the eternal Rule of Justice and Goodness; 'tis evident all Intelligent Creatures in their several Spheres and Proportions, ought to obey the same Rule according to the Law of their Nature; even though it could be supposed separate from that additional Obligation, of its being the positive Will and Command of God. And doubtless there have been many Men in all Ages in many parts of the heathen World, who not having Philosophy enough to collect from mere Nature any tolerably just and explicit apprehensions concerning

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the *Attributes of God*; much less having been able to deduce from thence, any clear and certain knowledge of his *Will*; have yet had a very great sense of *Right and Truth*, and been fully persuaded in their own Minds of many unalterable Obligations of *Morality*. But this Speculation, tho' necessary to be taken notice of in the distinct Order and Method of Discourse, is in it self too dry, and not of great use to *Us*, who are abundantly assured that all moral Obligations are moreover the plain and declared Will of God; As shall be shewn particularly, in its proper place.

7. Lastly, *This Law of Nature* has its *The Law* full obligatory Power, antecedent to all of *Nature* Consideration of any particular private obligatory, and personal Reward or Punishment, antecedent to all consideration of either by natural Consequence, or particular Rewards and Punishments, or by positive Appointment, to the Observation or Neglect of it. This also is very evident: Because if Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, Fitness and Unfitness of being practised, be (as has been shewn) originally, eternally, and necessarily, in the nature of the Things themselves; 'tis plain, that the view of particular Rewards or Punishments, which is only an After-consideration, and does not at all alter the nature of Things, cannot be the original cause of the Obligation of the Law, but is only an additional weight to enforce the practise of what Men were before obliged to by right Reason. There is no Man, who has any just Sense of the difference between

between Good and Evil, but must needs acknowledge, that Virtue and Goodness

* Dignæ itaq; sunt, quæ propter intrinsecam sibi perfectionem appetantur, etiam si nulla esset naturæ Lex, quæ illas imperaret. *Cum-berland. de Leg. Nat. pag. 287.*

are truly amiable, and to be chosen for their own sakes and intrinsic worth; though a Man had no prospect of gaining any particular advantage to himself, by the practise of them: And that on the contrary, Cruelty, Violence and Oppression, Fraud, Injustice, and all manner of Wickedness, are of themselves hateful, and by all means to be avoided;

* Ἀνὴρ δὲ καλὸς ὅστις, ἔχῃ ὁ μὴ ἀδικῶν,

Ἀλλ' ὅστις ἀδικεῖν δύναται, ὁ μὴ βέλεται.

Οὐδ' ὅς τὰ μικρὰ λαμβάνειν ἀπείρατο,

Ἀλλ' ὅς τὰ μέγιστα καὶ πλεῖν μὴ λαμβάνειν,

ἔχειν δύναμεν, καὶ κρατεῖν ἀζημίως.

Οὐδ' ὅς γὰρ ταῦτα πάντα διατηρεῖ μόνον,

Ἀλλ' ὅστις ἀδολον γνῶν. ἰαν τ' ἔχων φύσιν,

εἶναι δίκαιος, καὶ ἐδουκῆν δὲ δέλει.

Philemonis Fragmenta.

† Honeſtum id intelligimus, quod tale est, ut detracta omni utilitate, sine ullis præmiis fructibusque, per seipsum possit jure laudari. *Cic. de Finib. 2.*

Atq; hæc omnia propter se solum, ut nihil adjungatur emolumenti, petenda sunt. *Id. de Inventione lib. 2.*

Nihil est de quo minus dubitari possit, quam & honesta expetenda per se, & eodem modo turpia per se esse fugienda. *Id. de Finib. lib. 3.*

even* though a Man had absolute assurance, that he should bring no manner of inconvenience upon Himself by the Commission of any or all of these Crimes. This likewise is excellently and admirably expressed by Cicero: Virtue, saith † he, is that, which, though no profit or advantage whatsoever, was to be expected to a Man's self from the practise of it, yet must without all controversy be acknowledged to be truly desirable for its own sake alone: And accor-

dingly

dingly * all good Men love Right and Equity; and do many things without any prospect of Advantage at all, merely because they are just and right, and fit to be done. On the contrary, Vice is so odious in its own Nature, and so fit to be avoided, even though no Punishment was to ensue; that || no Man, who has made any tolerable proficiency in moral Philosophy, can in the least doubt, but that, if he was sure the thing could be for ever concealed entirely both from God and Men, so that there should not be the least suspicion of its being ever discovered; yet he ought not to do any thing unjustly, covetously, lustfully, or any way wickedly: Nay, † if a good Man had it in his Power to gain all his Neighbours Wealth by the least Motion of his Finger, and was sure it would never be at all suspected either by God or Man; unquestionably he would think he ought not to do it: And whoever wonders at this, has no Notion what it is to be really a

* Jus & omne honestum, sua sponte est expetendum: Etenim omnes viri boni, ipsam æquitatem & jus ipsum amant. *Id. de Legib. lib. 1.*

Optimi quique permulta ob eam unam causam faciunt, quia decet, quia rectum, quia honestum est; etsi nullum consecuturum emolumentum vident. *Id. de Finib. lib. 2.*

|| Satis enim nobis, (si modo aliquid in philosophia proficimus,) persuasum esse debet, si omnes deos hominesque celare possimus, nihil tamen avaræ, nihil injuste, nihil libidinose, nihil incontinenter esse faciendum. *Id. de Offic. lib. 3.*

3. Si nemo sciturus, nemo ne suspicaturus quidem sit, quum aliquid divitiarum, potentie, dominationis, libidinis causa feceris; si id diis hominibusque futurum sit semper ignotum, si ne facturus? *Id. ibid.*

† Itaque si vir bonus habeat hanc vim; ut, si digitis concrepuerit, possit in locupletum testamenta nomen ejus irrepere; hac vi non utatur, ne si exploratum quidem habeat id omnino neminem unquam suspicaturum. — Hoc qui admittitur, is se, quis sit vir bonus, nescire fatetur. *Idem de Offic. lib. 3.*

good

* Καὶ εἰ μὴ δυνατόν εἴη
ταῦτα λαμβάνειν καὶ θεὸς καὶ
ἀνθρώποις, ὁμοῦς δοτεῖν ἢ
τὸ λόγῳ ἐνεκα· ἵνα αὐτῷ δι-
καιοσύνη πρὸς ἀδικίαν αὐ-
τῷ κρείσσον. Plato de Re-
publ. lib. 10.

good Man. Not * that any
such thing is possible in
Nature, that any Wicked-
ness can be indeed con-
cealed from God; but only
upon such a Supposition,
the natural and necessary

difference between Justice and Injustice,
is made to appear more clearly and unde-
niably.

Yet it does not from thence at all follow, either that a good Man ought to have no respect to Rewards and Punishments, or that Rewards and Punishments are not absolutely necessary to maintain the practise of Virtue and Righteousness in this present World. 'Tis certain indeed, that Virtue and Vice are eternally and necessarily different; and that the one truly deserves to be chosen for its own sake, and the other ought by all means to be avoided, though a Man was sure for his own particular, neither to gain nor lose any thing by the practise of either. And if this was truly the state of things in the World; certainly That Man must have a very corrupt Mind indeed, who could in the least doubt, or so much as once deliberate with himself, which he would choose. But the Case does not stand thus. The Question Now in the general practise of the World, supposing all expectation of Rewards and Punishments set aside, will not be, whether a Man would choose Virtue for its own sake, and avoid Vice; but the practise of

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of Vice is accompanied with great Temptations and Allurements of Pleasure and Profit; and the practise of Virtue is often threatned with great Calamities, Losses, and sometimes even with Death it self: And this alters the Question, and destroys the practise of that which appears so reasonable in the whole Speculation, and introduces a necessity of Rewards and Punishments. For though Virtue is unquestionably *worthy to be chosen for its own sake*, even without any expectation of Reward; yet it does not follow that it is therefore intirely *Self-sufficient*, and able to support a Man under all kinds of Sufferings, and even Death it self, for its sake; without any prospect of future recompence. Here therefore began the Error of the *Stoicks*; who taught that the bare practise of Virtue, was it self the chief Good, and able of it self to make a Man happy under all the Calamities in the World. Their defense indeed of the cause of Virtue, was very brave: They saw well that its excellency was intrinsic, and founded in the Nature of the Things themselves, and could not be altered by any outward Circumstances; That therefore Virtue must needs be desirable for its own sake, and not merely for the Advantage it might bring along with it; And if so, then consequently neither could any external Disadvantage, which it might happen to be attended with, change the intrinsic worth of the Thing it self, or ever make it cease to be truly

truly desirable: Wherefore, in the case of Sufferings and Death for the sake of Virtue; not having any certain knowledge of a future State of Reward, (though the wisest of them did indeed hope for it and think it highly *probable*;) they were forced, that they might be consistent with their own Principles, to suppose the practise of Virtue a sufficient Reward to it self in all Cases, and a full compensation for all the Sufferings in the World: And accordingly they very bravely indeed taught, that the practise of Virtue was not

* Est autem unus dies bene & ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati anteponendus. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. l. 5.*

† Quæro si duo sint, quorum alter optimus vir, æquissimus, summa justitia, singulari fide; alter insigni scelere & audacia: Et si in eo sit errore civitas, ut bonum illum virum, sceleratum, facinorosum, nefarium putet; contra autem qui sit improbissimus, existimet esse summa probitate ac fide: proq; hac opinione omnium civium, bonus ille vir vexetur, rapiatur, manus ei deniq; auferantur, effodiantur oculi, damnetur, vinciarur, uratur, exterminetur, egeat; postremo, jure etiam optimo omnibus miserimus esse videatur; contra autem, ille improbus lauderetur, colatur, ab omnibus diligatur, omnes ad eum honores, omnia imperia, omnes opes, omnes deniq; copiarum conferantur, vir deniq; optimus omnium æstimatione, & dignissimus omni fortuna judicetur: Quis tandem erit tam *demens*, qui dubitet utrum se esse nali. *Idem de Republ. lib. 3. fragment.*

only * infinitely to be preferred before all the sinful Pleasures in the World; but also † that a Man ought without Scruple to chuse, if the Case was proposed to him, rather to undergo all possible sufferings with Virtue, than to obtain all possible worldly Happiness by Sin: And the suitable Practise of some few of them, as of *Regulus* for instance, who chose to die the cruellest Death that could be invented, rather than break his Faith with an Enemy; is indeed very wonderful and to be admired. But

yet, after all this, 'tis plain that the general Practise of Virtue in the World, can never be supported upon this Foot. The Discourse is admirable; but it seldom goes further than mere Words: And the Practise of those few who have acted accordingly, has not been imitated by the rest of the World. Men never will generally, and indeed it is not very reasonably to be expected they should, part with all the Comforts of Life, and even Life it self; without expectation of any future recompence. So that, if we suppose no future State of Rewards, it will follow that God has endued Men with such Faculties, as put them under a necessity of approving and choosing Virtue in the Judgment of their own Minds; and yet has not given them wherewith to support themselves in the suitable and constant Practise of it. The Consideration of which inexplicable Difficulty, ought to have led the Philosophers to a firm belief and expectation of a future State of Rewards and Punishments, without which their whole Scheme of Morality cannot be supported: And, because a thing of such necessity and importance to Mankind, was not more clearly and directly and universally made known; it ought to have led them to some farther Consequences also, which I shall have occasion particularly to deduce hereafter.

And

The manifold Absurdities of Mr. Hobbs's Doctrines concerning the original of Right, shown in particular.

And now from what has been said upon this Head, it is easy to see the Falsity and Weakness of Mr Hobbs's Doctrines; That there is no such thing as Just and Unjust, Right and Wrong, originally in the Nature of Things; That Men in their natural State, antecedent to all Compacts, are not obliged to universal Benevolence, nor to any moral Duty whatsoever; but are in a state of War, and have every one a Right to do whatever he has Power to do; And that, in Civil Societies, it depends wholly upon positive Laws or the Will of Governours, to define what shall be Just or Unjust. The contrary to all which, having been already fully demonstrated; there is no need of being large, in further disproving and confuting particularly these Assertions themselves. I shall therefore only mention a few Observations, from which some of the greatest and most obvious Absurdities of the chief Principles upon which Mr Hobbs builds his whole Doctrine in this matter, may most easily appear.

I. First then, the Ground and Foundation of Mr Hobbs's Scheme, is this; that * All Men being equal

* Ab æqualitate Naturæ oritur unicuique ea, quæ cupit, acquirendi Spes. Leviath. c. 13.

† Naturæ dedit unicuique jus in omnia. Hoc est, instatu mere naturali, sive antequam homines ullis pactis sese invicem obstrinxissent, unicuique licebat facere quæcunque; & in quoscunque; libebat; & possidere, uti, frui omnibus, quæ volebat & poterat. De. Cive. c. 1. § 10.

by nature, and naturally desiring the same things, have † every one a Right to every Thing; are every one desirous to have absolute Dominion

over all others; and may every One justly do whatever at any time is in his Power, by violently taking from Others either their possessions or Lives, to gain to himself that absolute Dominion. Now this is exactly the same thing, as if a Man should affirm, that a Part is equal to the Whole, or that one Body can be present in a Thousand places at once. For, to say that one Man has a full Right to the same individual things, which another Man at the same time has also a full Right to; is saying that two Rights may be || contradictory to each other; that is, that a thing may be Right, at the same time that it is confessed to be Wrong. For Example; if every Man has a Right to preserve his own Life, then * 'tis manifest I can have no Right to take any Man's Life away from him, unless he has first forfeited his own Right, by attempting to deprive me of mine. For otherwise, it might be Right for me to do That, which at the same time, because it could not be done but in breach of another Man's Right, it could not be Right for me to do; Which is the greatest Absurdity in the World. The true State of this Case therefore, is plainly this: In Mr Hobbs's State of Nature and Equality, every Man, having an equal right to preserve his own Life, 'tis evident has a right to an equal proportion

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|| Si impossibile sit singulis, omnes & omnia sibi inter subdicere; ratio quæ hunc finem proponit singulis, qui uni tantum contingere potest, sæpius quam millies proponeret impossibile, & semel tantum possibile. Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. pag. 217.

* Nec potest cujusquam jus seu libertas ab ulla lege relicta, eo extendere, ut liceat oppugnare ea, quæ aliis eadem Lege imperantur facienda. Id. pag. 219.

The Evidences of Natural

of all those things, which are either necessary or useful to Life: And consequently so far is it from being true, that any One has an original right to possess *All*, that on the contrary, whoever first attempts, without the *consent* of his Fellows, and except it be for some *publick Benefit*, to take to himself more than his *Proportion*, is the beginner of Iniquity, and the Author of all succeeding Mischief.

2. To avoid this Absurdity therefore, Mr *Hobbs* is forced to assert in the next place, that since every Man has confessedly a right to preserve his own Life, and consequently to do every thing that is necessary to preserve it; and since, in the State of Nature, Men will necessarily

† *Omnium adversus omnes, perpetuæ Suspiciones.*

—— *Bellum omnium in Omnes. De. Cive. c. 1. § 12.*

* *Spes unicuiq; securitatis conservationisq; suæ in eo sita est, ut viribus artibusq; propriis proximum suum vel palam vel ex insidiis præoccupare possit.*

Ibid. c. 5. § 1.

|| *Securitatis viam meliorem habet nemo Anticipatione. Leviath. c. 13.*

have † perpetual jealousies and suspicions of each others *Incroaching*; therefore just precaution gives every one a Right to * endeavour for his own Security to prevent, oppress, and destroy all others, either by secret Artifice or open Violence, as it shall happen at any time to be in his Power; as being the || only certain means of Self-preservation. But this is even

a plainer Absurdity, if possible, than the former. For, (besides that according to Mr *Hobbs's* Principles, Men, before positive Compacts, may justly do what mischief they please, even without the pretense of Self preservation;) what can be more

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more ridiculous, than to imagin a War of all Men against All, the directest and certainest means of the Preservation of all? Yes, says he, because it leads Men to a necessity of entring into Compact for each other's security. But then to make these Compacts obligatory, he is forced (as I shall presently observe more particularly) to recur to an † antecedent Law of Nature: And this destroys all that he had before said. For the same Law of Nature, which obliges Men to Fidelity, after having made a Compact; will unavoidably, upon all the same accounts, be found to oblige them, before all Compacts, to Contentment and mutual Benevolence, as the readiest and certainest means to the preservation and Happiness of them All. 'Tis true, Men by entring into Compacts and making Laws, agree to Compell one another to do what perhaps the mere sense of Duty, however really obligatory in the highest degree, would not without such Compacts, have force enough of it self to hold them to in practice: And so Compacts must be acknowledged to be in fact a great Addition and Strengthening of Mens Security. But this Compulsion makes no alteration in the Obligation it self; And only shows, that That entirely lawless State, which Mr Hobbs calls the State of Nature, is by no means truly Natural, or in any sense suitable to the Nature and Faculties of Man; but on the contrary, is a State of extremely unnatural and Intolerable Corruption: As I shall

† See de Cive, c. 3. § 1.

presently prove more fully from some other Considerations.

3. Another notorious Absurdity and Inconsistency in Mr *Hobbs's* Scheme, is this: That he all along supposes some particular Branches of the Law of Nature, (which he thinks necessary for the foundation of some parts of his own Doctrine,) to be originally obligatory from the bare reason of Things; at the same time that he denies and takes away innumerable others, which have plainly in the nature and reason of things the same foundation of being obligatory as the former, and without which the obligation of the former can never be solidly made out and defended. Thus, he supposes that in the State of Nature, before any Compact be made, every

* *Unicuique; licebat facere quaecumque; libebat. De Cive, c. 1. § 10.*

† Consequens est, ut *Nihil dicendum sit Injustum. Nomina Justi & Injusti, locum in hac conditione non habent. Leviath. c. 13.*

‖ Ex his sequitur, Injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocumque initur pactum.

— Siquis alicui noceat, quocumque nihil pactus est; damnum ei infert, non Injuriam. — Etenim si is qui damnum recipit, injuriam expostularet; is qui fecit sic diceret, *quid tu mihi? quare facerem ego tuo potius, quam meo libitu?* &c.

In qua ratione, ubi nulla intercesserunt pacta, non video quid sit quod possit reprehendi. *De Cive, c.*

3. § 4.

* *Man's own Will is his only Law; that † nothing a Man can do, is Unjust; and that, ‖ whatever mischief one Man does to another, is no injury nor Injustice; neither has the Person, to whom the mischief is done, how great soever it be, any just Reason to complain of Wrong; (I think it may here reasonably be presumed, that if Mr Hobbs had lived in such a State of Nature, and had happened to be himself the*

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Suffering Party, he would in this case have been of another Opinion :) And yet at the same time he supposes, that in the same State of Nature, Men are by all means obliged * to seek Peace, and † to enter into Compacts to remedy the fore-mentioned Mischiefs. Now if Men are obliged by the original reason and nature of Things, to seek terms of Peace, and get out of the pretended natural State of War, as soon as they can; how come they not to be obliged originally by the same reason and nature of things, to live from the beginning in universal Benevolence, and avoid entering into the State of War at all? He must needs confess they would be obliged to do so, did not Self-preservation necessitate them every Man to War upon others: But this cannot be true of the first Aggressor; Whom yet Mr Hobbs in the || place now cited, vindicates from being guilty of any Injustice: And therefore herein he unavoidably contradicts himself. Thus again, in most instances of Morality, he supposes Right and Wrong, Just and Unjust, to have no Foundation in the Nature of Things, but to depend entirely on positive Laws; that * the Rules or Distinctions of Good and Evil, Honest and Dishonest, are mere civil Constituti-

* Prima & fundamentalis Lex Naturæ est, querendam esse pacem, ubi haberi potest, &c. De Cive, c. 2. § 2.

† See de Cive cap. 2 & 3.

|| Ex his sequitur, Injuriam nemini fieri posse, &c.

* Regulas boni & mali, justi & injusti, honesti & inhonesti, esse leges civiles; ideoque, quod legislator præceperit, id pro bono; quod

veruerit, id pro malo habendum esse. *De Cive*, c. 12. § 1.

Quod Actio justa vel injusta sit, a jure imperantis provenit. Reges legitimi quæ imperant, justa faciunt imperando; quæ vetant, vetando faciunt injusta. *De Cive*, c. 12. § 1. [In which Section 'tis worth observing, how he ridiculously interprets those Words of *Salomon*, (*Dabis servo tuo cor docile, ut possit Discernere inter bonum & malum*) to signify, not his Understanding or Discerning, but his Decreeing what shall be good and what evil.]

† Si tamen Lex civilis jubeat invadere aliquid, non est illud *Furtum, Adulterium*, &c. *De Cive*, c. 14. § 10.

|| Sequitur ergo legibus illis, non *Occides, non Mæchabere, non Furabere, Parentes honorabis*, nihil aliud præcepisse Christum, quam ut cives & subditi suis Principibus & summis Imperatoribus in quæstionibus omnibus circa *meum, tuum, suum, alienum*, absolute obedirent. *De Cive*, c. 17. § 10.

* Si quæzatur an obediendum civitati sit, si impeteretur Deum colere sub *Imagine*, coram iis qui id fieri honorificum esse putant; Certe faciendum est. *De Cive*, c. 15. § 18.

† Universaliter & in omnibus obedire obligamur. *De Cive*, c. 14. § 10.

Doctrina alia, quæ Obedientiæ civili repugnat, est, quicquid faciat Civis quicumq; contra Conscientiam suam, peccatum esse. *Leviath.* c. 29.

Opinio eorum qui docent, peccare subditos, quoties mandata Principum suorum, quæ sibi Injusta videntur esse, exsequuntur, & erronea est, & inter eas numeranda quæ obedientiæ civili adversantur. *De Cive*, c. 12. § 2,

ons; and whatever the Chief Magistrate Commands, is to be accounted Good; whatever he forbids, Evil: that † 'tis the Law of the Land only, which makes Robbery to be Robbery; or Adultery, to be Adultery; that || the Commandments, to Honour our Parents, to do no Murder, not to commit Adultery, and all the other Laws of God and Nature, are no further obligatory, than the Civil Power shall think fit to make them so; nay, that * where the Supreme Authority commands Men to worship God by an Image or Idol, in Heathen Countries (for in this instance he cautiously excepts Christian ones) it is lawful and their Duty to do it; and (agreeably, as a natural Consequence to all This,) that † 'tis Mens po-

stive

stive Duty to obey the Commands of the Civil Power in all things, even in things clearly and directly against their Conscience; (that is, that 'tis their positive Duty to do That, which at the same time they know plainly it is their Duty not to do:)

* Keeping up indeed always in their own Minds, an inward desire to observe the Laws of Nature and Conscience; but not being bound to observe them in their outward Actions, except when it is safe so to do: (He might as well have said, Laws and Constitutions have || Power to make Light be Darknes, and Darknes Light; to make Sweet be Bitter, and Bitter Sweet: And indeed, as one Absurdity will naturally lead a Man into

another, he does say something very like

it; namely, that † the Civil Authority is to judge of all Opinions and Doctrines whatsoever; to * determine Questions Philosophical,

Mathematical; and, because indeed the signification of Words is arbitrary, even

|| Arithmetical ones also, as whether a Man

shall presume to affirm that Two and Three make Five or not :) And yet at the same

time, some particular Things, which it would either have been too flagrantly scandalous for him to have made depending upon humane Laws; as that

* Concludendum est, Legem Naturæ semper & ubiq; obligare in Foro interno, sive conscientia; non semper in Foro externo; sed cum solummodo, cum secure id fieri possit. De Cive, c. 3.

that Humane

|| Quæ si tanta potentia est stultorum sententiis atq; iussis, ut eorum suffragiis rerum natura vertatur; cur non sanciant, ut quæ mala perniciosaq; sunt, habeantur pro bonis ac salutaribus? Cicero de Legib. lib. 1.

† De Cive, c. 6. § 11.

* Ibid. c. 17. § 12.

|| Ibid. c. 18. § 4.

The Evidences of Natural

† Neq; enim an honorifice de Deo sentiendum sit, neq; an sit amandus, rimendus, colendus, dubitari potest. Sunt enim hæc Religionum per omnes gentes communia. *De Homine cap.*

14.

* Si is qui summam habet imperium, seipsum, imperantem dico, interficere alicui imperet; non tenetur. Neq; Parentem, &c. cum filius mori quam vivere infamis atq; exosus malit. Et alii casus sunt, cum mandata factu inhonesta sunt, &c. *De Cive, c.*

6. § 13

‖ Lex naturalis est *Pactis* standum esse, sive Fidem observandam esse. *De Cive*

c. 3 § 1.

† Lex naturalis omnes leges civiles jubet observari. *Ibid. c. 14. § 10.*

** Legem Civilem, quæ non sit lara in conrumeliam Dei (cujus respectu ipsæ Civitates non sunt sui juris, nec dicuntur leges ferre) &c. *De Cive, c. 14. § 10.*

Pacti violatio &c. See *de Cive, c. 3. § 3.*

† God is to be Loved, Honoured and Adored; that * a Man ought not to Murder his Parents; and the like: or else, which were of Necessity to be supposed for the Foundation of his own Scheme; as that ‖ Compassion ought to be faithfully performed, and Obedience † to be duly paid to Civil Powers: the Obligation of these Things, he is forced to deduce intirely from the internal Reason and Fitness of the Things themselves; ** antecedent to, independent upon, and unalterable by all Humane Constitutions whatsoever. In which Matter, he is guilty of the grossest Absurdity and Inconsistency that can be. For if those greatest and strongest of all our Obligations; to Love and Honour God, for Instance; or, to perform Compassion faithfully; depend not at all on any Humane Constitution, but must of Necessity (to avoid making Obligations reciprocally depend on each other in a Circle) be confessed to arise originally from, and be founded in, the eternal Reason and unalterable Nature and Relations of Things themselves; And the nature and force of these Obligations

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Obligations be sufficiently clear and evident; so that he who [†] *Dishonours God*, or ^{*} *willfully breaks his Faith*, is (according to Mr Hobbs's own reasoning) guilty of as great an Absurdity in *Practise*, and of as plainly contradicting the right Reason of his own Mind, as he who in a *Dispute* is reduced to a necessity of asserting something inconsistent with it self; And the original Obligation to these Duties, can from hence only be distinctly deduced: Then for the same reason, all the other Duties likewise of natural Religion; such as *universal Benevolence*, *Justice*, *Equity*, and the like; (which I have before proved to receive in like manner their *Power of obliging*, from the eternal Reason and Relations of Things;) must needs be obligatory, antecedent to any consideration of *positive Compact*, and unalterably and independently on all *Humane Constitutions* whatsoever: And consequently, Mr Hobbs's whole Scheme; (both of a State of Nature at first, wherein there was no such thing as Right or Wrong, Just or Unjust, at all; and of these things depending afterwards, by virtue of Compact, wholly and absolutely on the positive and arbitrary

† See *de Civ.* c. 14. § 10.
* Est Similitudo quædam inter id, quod in vita communi vocatur *Injuria*, & id, quod in Scholis solet appellari *Absurdum*. Quæmadmodum enim is, qui argumentis cogitur ad negationem assertionis quam prius asseruerat, dicitur redigi ad *Absurdum*: eodem modo is, qui præ animi impotentia facit vel omittit id quod se non facturum vel non omisurum pacto suo ante promiserat, *Injuriam* facit; neq; minus in contradictionem incidit, quam qui in Scholis reducitur ad *Absurdum*. — Est itaq; *Injuria*, *Absurditas* quædam in conversatione; sicut *Absurditas*, *Injuria* quædam est in disputatione. *De Civ.* c. 3. § 3.

trary determination of the Civil Power;) falls this way entirely to the Ground, by his having been forced to suppose *some particular things* obligatory, originally, and in their own nature. On the contrary: If the Rules of Right and Wrong, Just and Unjust, have *none of them* any obligatory force in the State of Nature, *antecedent* to positive Compact; Then for the same Reason, neither will they be of any force *after* the Compact, so as to afford Men any certain and real Security; (Excepting only what may arise from the *Compulsion of Laws*, and *Fear of Punishment*; which therefore it may well be supposed is all that Mr Hobbs really means at the bottom.) For if there be no Obligation of *Just* and *Right*, antecedent to the *Compact*: then Whence arises the Obligation of the *Compact* it *self*, on which he supposes all other Obligations to be founded? If, *before* any Compact was made, it was no Injustice for a Man to take away the Life of his Neighbour, not for his own Preservation, but merely to

† Ex his sequitur, injuri-
am nemini fieri posse, nisi
ei quocum initur pactum. De
Crue, c. 3. § 4. [Which whole
Section highly deserves to be
read and well considered, as
containing the Secret of Mr
Hobbs's whole Scheme.]

satisfy an † arbitrary humour or pleasure, and without any reason or provocation at all; How comes it to be an Injustice, *after* he has made a Compact, to break and neglect it? Or what is it that makes *breaking ones Word*, to be a greater and more unnatural Crime, than *killing a Man* merely for no other reason, but because no positive Compact has been made to the contrary? So that

* this

* this way also, *Mr Hobbs's* whole Scheme is intirely destroyed.

4. That State, which *Mr Hobbs* calls the *State of Nature*, is not in any sense a Natural State; but a State of the greatest, most unnatural, and most intolerable *Corruption*, that can be imagined. For *Reason*, which is the proper Nature of Man, can never (as has been before shown) lead Men to any thing else than *universal Love and Benevolence*: And *Wars, Hatred, and Violence*, can never arise but from extreme *Corruption*. A Man may sometimes, 'tis true, in his own Defense, be necessitated, in compliance with the Laws of Nature and Reason, to make War upon his Fellows: But the first Aggressours, who upon *Mr Hobbs's* Principles, || have a natural *Will* to hurt each other, and that every one in the State of Nature has a * *Right* to do whatever he has a *Will* to;) The first Aggressors, I say, who upon these Principles assault and violently spoil as many as they are superiour to in Strength, without any regard to Equity or Proportion;

* Itaque patet quod, si Hobbiana ratiocinatio esset valida, omnis simul *Legum Civilium* obligatio collaberetur; nec aliter fieri potest quin earum vis labefacteretur ab omnibus principiis, quæ *Legum naturalium* vim tollunt aut minuant; quoniam in his fundatur & regiminis civilis auctoritas ac securitas, & legum a civitatibus latarum vigor. *Cumberland, de Leg. Nat. pag. 303.*

Eriam extra regimen civile, a malis omnigenis simul consideratis tutior erit qui actibus externis *Leges Naturæ* constantissime observabit, quam qui, juxta doctrinam Hobbianam, vi aut insidiis alios omnes conando præoccupare, securitatem sibi quaesiverit. *Id. pag. 304.*

|| *Voluntas ledendi*, omnibus inest in statu Naturæ. *De Civ. c. 1. § 4.*

* In statu naturali, unicuique licebat facere quæcumque, & in quoscunque libebat. *I. bid. § 10.*

on; these can never, by any colour what-
soever, be excused from

† Si nihil existimat con-
tra naturam fieri, homini-
bus violandis; quid cum
eo differas, qui omnino ho-
minem ex homine tollat?

Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

‡ Ταῦτα δὲ θύλακα ἐστὶν ἡ
πομπήσαν φύσει, — γυγνό-
μενα, τέχνη καὶ τοῖς νόμοις,
ἀλλ' ἐστὶν πρὸς φύσει — φασ-
κόντων ἔστι τὸ δικαιοτάτον δὲ,
πὶ πῶς ἂν νικήσῃ βία ζῴοντο.
ἔστιν ἀσέβεια καὶ κακία —
ἐστὶν λάβω ἀνθρώπων νόον
δημοσίᾳ πολλοῖς τε καὶ ἰδίᾳ
ἰσχυροῖς. *Plato de Leg. lib.*
10.

* Homines Libertatis &
Dominii per naturam amato-
res. *Leviath. c. 17.*

Nemini dubium esse de-
bet, quin avidius ferrentur
homines natura sua, si me-
tus abesset, ad Dominationem
quam ad Societatem. *De*
Cive, c. 1. § 2.

† utterly devested
themselves of *Humane Na-*
ture, and having || intro-
duced into the World, con-
trary to all the Laws of
Nature and Reason, the
greatest Calamities and
most unnatural Confusion,
that Mankind by the high-
est Abuse of their natural
Powers and Faculties, are
capable of falling under.
Mr *Hobbs* pretends indeed,
that one of the first and
most natural Principles of
humane Life, is * a Desire
necessarily arising in every
Man's Mind, of having
Power and Dominion over
Others; and that this na-
turally impells Men to use
Force and Violence to ob-
tain it: But neither is

it true, that Men, following the di-
ctates of Reason and uncorrupted Na-
ture, desire disproportionate Power and
Dominion over others; neither, if
it was natural to desire such Power,
would it all follow that it was
agreeable to nature to use violent and
hurtful means to obtain it. For since
the only natural and good reason to de-
sire Power and Dominion (more than
what is necessary for every Man's Self-
prefer-

preservation) is, that the Possessor of such Power may have a larger compass and greater Abilities and Opportunities of doing good, (as is evident from God's exercise of perfectly *Absolute Power*;) 'tis plain that no Man, obeying the uncorrupted Dictates of Nature and Reason, can desire to increase his Power by such destructive and pernicious Methods, the prevention of which is *the only good reason* that makes the Power it self truly desirable. All Violence therefore and War are plainly the Effects, not of natural Desires, but of unnatural and extreme Corruption. And this Mr *Hobbs* himself unwarily proves against himself, by those very Arguments, whereby he indeavours to prove that War and Contention is more *natural* to Men, than to *Bees* or *Ants*. For his Arguments on this Head, are all drawn from Mens using themselves (as the Animals he is speaking of, cannot do,) to † *Strive about Honours and Dignities*, till the Contention grows up into *Hatred, Seditions and Wars*; to * *separate each one his private Interest from the publick, and value himself highly above others, upon getting and engrossing to himself more than his Proportion of the things of Life*; to ‖ *find fault with each others management, and thro' Self-conceit bring in continual In-*

† *Homines inter se de Honoribus & Dignitatibus perpetuo contendunt; sed Animalia illa [Apes & Formicæ] non item. Itaq; inter Homines Invidia, Odium, Bellum, &c. Leviath. c. 17.*

* *Inter Animalia illa, Bonum publicum & privatum idem est. — Homini autem in bonis propriis nihil tam jucundum est, quam quod alienis sunt majora. Ib.*

‖ *Animantia quæ rationem non habent, nullum defectum vident, vel videre se*

novations

putant, in administratione suarum rerum publicarum: Sed in multitudine Hominum plurimi sunt qui præ cæteris sapere existimantes, conantur res novare; & diversi novatores innovant diversis modis; id quod est distractio & bellum civile. *De Cive, c. 5. § 5.*

† Animantia illa verborum arte illa carent, qua homines alii aliis videri faciunt Bonum Malum, & Malum Bonum; Magnum Parvum, & Parvum Magnum. *Leviath. c. 17.*

* Animalia bruta, quam diu bene sibi est, cæteris non invident: Homo autem tum maxime molestus est, quando otio opibusq; maxime abundat. *Ibid.*

|| Consensus creaturarum illarum brutarum naturalis est; hominum pacticia tantum, id est artificiosa. *De Cive, c. 5. § 5.*

tion, could easily have chosen to have instanced in.

5. Lastly, That chief and principal Argument, which is one of the main Foundations of Mr *Hobbs's* and his Followers

† Regni Divini naturalis Jus derivatur ab eo, quod Divina Potentia resistere impossibile est. *Leviath. c. 31.*

In regno naturali, regnandi & puniendi eos qui

novations and distractions; to † impose one upon another, by Lyes, Falsifying and Deceit, calling good evil, and evil good; to * grow envious at the prosperity of others, or proud and domineering when themselves are in ease and plenty; and to || keep up tolerable Peace and Agreement among themselves, merely by artificial Compacts and the compulsion of Laws. All which things, are so far from being truly the Natural Effects and result of Mens Reason and other Faculties; that on the contrary they are evidently some of the grossest Abuses and most unnatural Corruptions thereof, that any one who was arguing on the opposite side of the Que-

estion, could easily have chosen to have instanced in.

5. Lastly, That chief and principal Argument, which is one of the main Foundations of Mr *Hobbs's* and his Followers System; namely, that † Gods irresistible Power is the only foundation of his Dominion, and the only measure of his Right over his Creatures; and consequently,

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quently, * that every other Being has just so much Right, as it has natural Power; that is, that it is naturally Right for every thing, to do whatever it has Power to do; This Argument, I say, is of all his others the most notoriously false and absurd. As may sufficiently appear (besides what has been ** already said, of God's other Perfections being † as much the measure of his Right, as his Power is;) from this single Consideration. Suppose the Devil, (for when Men run into extreme impious assertions, they must be answered with suitable Suppositions;) Suppose, I say, such a Being as we conceive the Devil to be; of extreme malice, cruelty, and iniquity; was indued with supreme absolute Power, and made use of it only to render the World as miserable as was possible, in the most cruel, arbitrary and unequal manner that can be imagined: Would it not follow undeniably, upon Mr Hobbs's Scheme; since Dominion is founded in Power, and Power is the measure of Right, and consequently Absolute Power gives Absolute Right; that such a Government as this, would not only be as much of Necessity indeed to be submitted to, but also that it would

leges suas violant, jus Deo est a sola potentia irresistibili. De Cive, c. 15. §. 5.

Iis quorum Potentia resisti non potest, & per consequens Deo omnipotenti, jus Dominandi ab ipsa potentia derivatur. Ibid.

* Nam quoniam Deus jus ad omnia habet; & jus Dei nihil aliud, est quam ipsa Dei potentia; hinc sequitur, unamquamque rem naturalem tantum juris ex natura habere, quantum potentia habet. Spinoza de Monarch. cap. 2. [See also Tractat. Theolog. politic. cap. 16.] ** pag. 87.

† See Cumberland de Leg. Natura, locis supra citatis.

be

* See

Hobbs de
Cive, c. 3.

§ 4.

be as *Just* and *Right*, and * *with as little reason to be complained of*, as is the present Government of the World in the Hands of the *Ever-Blessed* and *infinitely Good* God, whose Love and Goodness and tender Mercy appears every where over all his Works.

Here Mr *Hobbs*, as an unanswerable Argument in defense of his Assertion, ur-

† Quod si jus regnandi habeat Deus ab Omnipotentia sua, manifestum est Obligationem ad præstandum ipsi obedientiam, incumbere hominibus propter imbecillitatem. [To explain which, he adds in his Note;] Si cui durum hoc videbitur, illum rogo ut tacita cogitatione considerare velit, si essent duo Omnipotentes, uter utri obedire obligaretur. Confitebitur, credo, neutrum neutri obligari. Hoc si verum est, verum quoq; est quod posui, homines ideo Deo subiectos esse, quia omnipotentes non sunt. De Cive, c. 15. § 7.

ges; that † the only Reason, why Men are bound to obey God, is plainly nothing but *Weakness* or *Want of Power*; because if they themselves were *All-powerful*, 'tis manifest they could not be under any Obligation to obey; and consequently *Power* would give them an undoubted *Right* to do what they pleased. That is to say: If Men were not created and dependent Beings; 'tis true they could not indeed be obliged to the proper Relative Duty of created and dependent Be-

ings, viz to obey the Will and Command of another in things *Positive*: But from their Obligation to the Practise of *Moral* Virtues, of Justice, Righteousness, Equity, Holiness, Purity, Goodness, Beneficence, Faithfulness and Truth, from which Mr *Hobbs* fallaciously in this Argument, and most impiously in his whole Scheme, endeavours

* to

* to discharge them; from this they could not be discharged by any addition of Power whatsoever: Because the obligation to these things, is not, as the obligation to obey in things of arbitrary and positive Constitution, founded only in the Weakness, Subjection, and Dependency of the Persons obliged; but also and chiefly in the eternal and unchangeable Nature and Reason of the Things themselves: For these things are the Law of God himself; not only to his Creatures, but also to Himself, as being the Rule of all his own Actions in the Government of the World.

* Ut enim omniam vim & naturam Deorum; ne homines quidem censeris, nisi imbecilli essent, futuros beneficos & benignos fuisse.
etc. de Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

I have been the longer upon this Head, because *Moral Virtue* is the Foundation and the Sum, the Essence and the Life of all true Religion: For the Security whereof, all positive Institution was principally designed: For the Restoration whereof, all revealed Religion was ultimately intended; And inconsistent where-with, or in opposition to which, all Doctrines whatsoever, supported by what pretense of Reason or Authority soever, be as certainly and necessarily false, as God is true.

II. Though these eternal moral Obligations be indeed of themselves incumbent on all rational Beings, even antecedent to the considera-

T tion

tion of their being the positive Will and Command of God; yet that which most strongly confirms, and in practise most effectually and indispensably inforces them upon us, is this; that both from the Perfections of God, and the Nature of Things, and from several other collateral Considerations, it appears, that as God is himself necessarily Just and Good in the exercise of his infinite Power in the Government of the whole World, so he cannot but likewise positively Require that all his rational Creatures should in their Proportion be so too, in the exercise of each of their Powers in their several and respective Spheres: That is, as these eternal moral Obligations are really in perpetual force, merely from their own Nature, and the abstract reason of Things; so also they are moreover the express and unalterable Will, Command and Law of God to his Creatures, which he cannot but expect should in obedience to his Supreme Authority, as well as in compliance with the natural reason of Things, be regularly and constantly observed through the whole Creation.

This Proposition is very evident, and has little need of being particularly proved.

That moral Duties are the positive Will and Command of God, proved from the consideration of the Divine Attributes.

For 1st, the same Reasons which prove to us, that God must of Necessity be himself infinitely Holy, and Just, and Good, manifestly prove that it must likewise be his Will, that all his Creatures should be so also, according to the Proportions and Capacities of their several Natures. That there are eternal and necessary Differences of Things, Agreements and Disagreements

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Proportions and Disproportions, Fittinesses and Unfittinesses of Things, absolutely in their own Nature; has been before largely demonstrated: *That* with regard to these fixt and certain proportions and fittinesses of Things, the Will of God, which can neither be influenced by any external Power, nor imposed upon by any error or deceit, constantly and necessarily determines it self to choose always what in the whole is Best and Fittest to be done, according to the unalterable Rules of Justice, Equity, Goodness and Truth; has likewise been already proved: *That* the same considerations Ought also regularly to determine the Wills of all Subordinate rational Beings, to act in constant conformity to the same eternal Rules; has in like manner been shown before. It remains therefore only to prove, that these very same moral Rules, which are thus of themselves really obligatory, as being the necessary result of the unalterable reason and nature of Things; are moreover the positive Will and Command of God to all rational Creatures: And consequently, that the wilful transgression or neglect of them, is as truly an insolent contempt of the Authority of God, as it is an absurd confounding of the natural reasons and proportions of Things. Now this also plainly follows from what has been already said down. For the same absolute Perfection of the Divine Nature, which (as has been before shown) makes us certain that God must Himself be of Necessity infinite-

ly Holy, Just and Good; makes it equally certain, that he cannot possibly approve Iniquity in Others: And the same Beauty, the same Excellency, the same Weight and Importance of the Rules of everlasting Righteousness, with regard to which God is always pleased to make those Rules the Measure of all his Own Actions; prove it impossible but he must likewise will and desire, that all rational Creatures should proportionably make them the Measure of *Theirs*. Even among *Men*, there is no earthly Father, but in those things which he esteems his own Excellencies, desires and expects to be imitated by his Children: How much more is it necessary that *God*, who is infinitely far from being subject to such Passions and Variableness as frail *Men* are, and has an infinitely tenderer and heartier concern for the Happiness of his Creatures, than mortal *Man* can have for the welfare of their Posterity; must desire to be imitated by his Creatures in those Perfections, which are the Foundation of his own unchangeable Happiness? In the exercise of his Supreme Power, we cannot imitate him; In the extent of his unerring Knowledge, we cannot attain to any Similitude with him. We cannot at all *Thunder with a Voice like Him*; nor are we able to search out and comprehend the least part of the depth of his unfathomable *Wisdom*: But his *Holiness* and *Goodness*, his *Justice*, *Righteousness* and *Truth*; these things we can understand; in these things we can imitate him; nay,

Job 40, 9

we can cannot approve our selves to him as obedient Children, if we do not imitate him therein. If God be himself essentially of infinite *Holiness* and *Purity*; (as, from the Light of Nature, 'tis of all things most manifest that he is;) it follows, that 'tis impossible but he must likewise be of purer Hab. 1, 13. Eyes than to behold with approbation any manner of *Impurity* in his Creatures; And consequently it must needs be his Will, that they should All (according to the measure of their frail and finite Nature) be *Holy as he is Holy*. If God is himself a Being of infinite *Justice*, *Righteousness* and *Truth*; it must needs be his Will, that all rational Creatures, whom he has created after his own Image, to whom he has communicated some resemblance of his Divine Perfections, and whom he has endued with excellent Powers and Faculties to enable them to distinguish between Good and Evil; should imitate him in the exercise of those glorious Attributes, by conforming all their Actions to the eternal and unalterable Law of Righteousness. If God is himself a Being of infinite Goodness; making his Sun to rise on the Evil Mat. 5, 45. and on the Good, and sending Rain on the Just and on the Unjust; having never left Act 14, 17. himself wholly without Witness, but always doing Good, giving Men Rain from Heaven and fruitful Seasons, and filling their Hearts with Food and Gladness: it cannot but be his Will, that all reasonable Creatures should, by mutual Love and Benevolence, permit and assist each other to enjoy in particular the

the several Effects and Blessings of the Divine universal Goodness. Lastly, if God is himself a Being of infinite Mercy and Compassion; as 'tis plain he bears long with Men before he punishes them for their Wickedness, and often freely forgives them

Mat. 18. his *ten thousand Talents*: It must needs be
24, 28. his Will, that they should forgive one
Lu. 6. 36. another their *hundred Pence*; being *merciful*
one to another, as *he is merciful* to them
Mar. 11. all; and *having Compassion* each on bi Fel
23. *low-Servants*, as *God has pity on Them*.

Thus from the *Attributes* of God, natural Reason leads Men to the Knowledge of his *Will*: All the same Reasons and Arguments, which discover to Men the *natural Fitnesses or Unfitnesses of Things*, and the *necessary Perfections or Attributes of God*

proving equally at the

* Ita principem Legem illam & ultimam, mentem esse omnia ratione aut cogentis aut verantis Dei. Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

Quæ vis non modo senior est quam ætas populorum & civitatum, sed aequalis illius cælum atq; terras tuentis & regentis Dei. Neq; enim esse Mens Divina sine ratione potest, nec ratio divina non hanc vim in rectis pravisque; sancientiis habere. Ibid.

same time that * That which is truly the *Law of Nature*, or the *Reason of Things*, is in like manner the *Will of God*. And

from hence the *Sober* and most *Intelligent* Persons among the *Heathen* in all Ages, very rightly and wisely concluded, that the best and certainest part of *Natural Religion*, which

was of the greatest importance, and where

in was the least danger of their being mistaken; was to *imitate* the moral *Attributes of God*, by a *Lib*

† Vis Deos propitiare? Bonus esto: Satis illos co- hui, qui imitatus est. Se- nec. epist. 96.

of Holiness, Righteousness and Charity: Whereas in the *External* part of their Worship, there was nothing but Uncertainty and Doubtfulness: It being absolutely impossible, without express Revelation, to discover what, in that particular, they might be secure would be truly acceptable to God.

This Method of deducing the *Will* of God, from his *Attributes*; is of all others the best and clearest, the certainest and most universal, that the Light of Nature affords. Yet there are also (as I said) some other collateral considerations, which help to prove and confirm the same thing; namely, that all moral Obligations, arising from the Nature and Reason of Things, are likewise the positive Will and Command of God. As

2. This appears in some measure from the consideration of God's Creation. For God by *Creating* Things, manifests it to be his Will, that Things should be what they *Are*. And as Providence wonderfully preserves things in their present State; and all necessary Agents, by constantly and regularly obeying the Laws of their Nature, necessarily employ all their natural Powers in promoting the same End; so 'tis evident it cannot

Καὶ ὃ δεινὸν ἂν εἴη, εἰ
ὡς τὰ δῶρα καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις
ἀποβλέπουσιν ἡμῶν οἱ θεοί,
ἀλλὰ μὴ ὡς τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ
τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα
πολλὰ γὰρ μάλλον,
οἰκταί, ἢ ὡς τὰς πολυτελεῖς
πάντας πνευματικὰς τε καὶ
δυνάμεις.
Plato in Alcibiade 2.

Colitur autem, non tantorum opinis corporibus contrucidatis, nec auro argenteoq; suspenso, nec in thesauros stipe infusa; sed pia & recta voluntate. Senec. epist. 116.

* *Mens humana non potest non judicare, esse longe credibilius, quod eadem constantissima voluntas, a qua hominibus datum est esse, pariter mallet ipsos porro esse & valere, hoc est, conservari & felicitate frui, quam illo derubari de statu, in quo ipsos collocavit. — Sic scilicet e voluntate creandi, cognoscitur voluntas conservandi tuendiq; homines. Ex hac autem innotescit obligatio, qua tenemur ad inserviendum eidem voluntati notæ. Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. pag. 227.*

not but * be the Will of God, that all rational Creatures, whom he has indued with those singular Powers and Faculties, of Understanding, Liberty and Free-Choice; whereby they are exalted in Dignity above the the rest of the World; should likewise employ those their extraordinary Faculties in preserving the Order and Harmony of the Creation, and not introducing Disorder and Confusion therein. The

Nature indeed and Relations, the Proportions and Disproportions, the Fitnesses and Unfitnesses of things, are eternal and in themselves absolutely unalterable; But this is only upon Supposition that the Things Exist, and that they Exist in such manner as they at present do. Now that things Exist in such manner as they do, or that they Exist at all; depends entirely on the Arbitrary Will and good Pleasure of God: At the same time therefore, and by the same means, that God manifests it to be his Will that things should Exist, and that they should Exist in such manner as they do; (as by Creating them he at first did, and by Preserving them he still continually does, declare it to be his Will they should;) he at the same time manifestly declares, that all such moral Obligations, as are the result of the necessary Proportions

and Relations of Things, are likewise His positive Will and Command. And consequently, whoever acts contrary to the before-mentioned Reason and Proportion of Things; by dishonouring God, by introducing unjust and unequal Dealings among Equals, by destroying his own Being, or by any way corrupting, abusing and misapplying the Faculties wherewith God has indued him; (as has been above more largely explained :) is unavoidably guilty of Transgressing at the same time the positive Will and Command of God, which in this manner also, is sufficiently discovered and made known to Him.

3. The same thing may likewise further appear from the following Consideration. Whatever tends directly and certainly to promote the Good and Happiness of the Whole, and (as far as is consistent with that chief End) to promote also the Good and Welfare of every particular part of the Creation, must needs be agreeable to the Will of God; who being infinitely Self-sufficient to his own Happiness, could have no other Motive to create Things at all, but only that he might communicate to them his Goodness and Happiness; and who consequently cannot but expect and require, that all his Creatures should according to their several

And from the Tendency of the practise of Morality to the Good and Happiness of the whole World.

* Dubitari non potest, quin Deus, qui ita naturalem rerum omnium ordinem constituit, ut talia sint actionum humanarum consequentia erga ipsos auctores; fecitque, ut ordinaria hæc consequentia ab ipsis præsciri possint, aut summa cum probabilitate expectari; voluerit hæc ab iis considerari, antequam ad agendum se accingerent; atque eos his provisus velut argumentis in Legum sanctione contentis determinari. Cumberl: de Lég. Nat. pag. 228.

Powers

Rektor, seu Causa prima rationalis, ejus voluntate res ita disponuntur, ut hominibus satis evidenter indicetur, Actus quosdam illorum esse media necessaria ad finem ipsis necessarium; Vult homines ad hos Actus obligari, vel hos Actus Imperat. *Id. pag. 285.*

living agreeably to the unalterable Rules of Justice, Righteousness, Equity and Truth;) is the certainest and directest means to promote the Welfare and Happiness, as well of every Man in particular, both in Body and Mind, as of all Men in general considered with respect to Society; is so very manifest, that even the greatest Enemies of all Religion, who suppose it to be nothing more than a worldly or State-policy, do yet by that very Supposition confess thus much concerning it. And indeed This, it is not possible for any one to deny.

† Pari sane ratione (ac in Arithmetice operationibus) Doctrinæ Moralis veritas fundatur in immutabili coherencia inter Felicitatem summam quam Hominum vires assequi valent, & Actus Benevolentiae universalis. *Id. pag. 23.*

Powers and Faculties, in deavour to promote the same end. Now that the exact observance of all those moral Obligations, which have before been proved to arise necessarily from the Nature and Relations of Things; (that is to say, living agreeably to the unalterable Rules of Justice, Righteousness, Equity and Truth;) is the certainest and directest means to promote the Welfare and Happiness, as well of every Man in particular, both in Body and Mind, as of all Men in general considered with respect to Society; is so very manifest, that even the greatest Enemies of all Religion, who suppose it to be nothing more than a worldly or State-policy, do yet by that very Supposition confess thus much concerning it. And indeed This, it is not possible for any one to deny. For the practise of moral Virtue does † as plainly and undeniably tend to the natural Good of the World; as any Physical Effect or Mathematical Truth, is naturally consequent to the Principles on which it depends, and from which it is regularly derived: And

without such Practise in some degree, the World can never be happy in any tolerable measure: As is sufficiently evident from Mr. Hobbs's own description of the extreme miserable

miserable condition that Men would be in, through the Total Defect of the Practise of all *moral Virtue*, if they were to live in That State, which He stiles (falsely and contrary to all reason, as has been before fully proved,) *the State of Nature*; but which really is a State of the grossest Abuse and most unnatural corruption and misapplication of Men's natural Faculties, that can be imagined. For since God has plainly so constituted the nature of Man, that they stand continually in need of each others Help and Assistance, and can never live comfortably without Society and mutual Friendship, and are endued with the Faculties of Reason and Speech, and with other natural Powers, evidently fitted to enable them to assist each other in all matters of Life, and mutually to promote universal Love and Happiness; 'tis manifestly agreeable to nature, and to the *Will of God* who gave them these Faculties, that they should employ them wholly to this regular and good End: And consequently, 'tis on the contrary evident likewise, that all Abuse and Misapplication of these Faculties, to hurt and destroy, to cheat and defraud, to oppress, insult, and domineer over each other; is directly contrary both to the dictates of Nature and to the *Will of God*; who, necessarily doing always what is Best and Fittest and most for the Benefit of the whole Creation, 'tis manifest cannot will the corruption and destruction of any of his Creatures; any otherwise than as his Preserving

Preserving their natural Faculties, (which in themselves are good and excellent, but cannot but be capable of being abused and misapplied,) necessarily implies a consequential Permission of such Corruption.

And This now, is the great Aggravation of the Sin and Folly of all Immorality; that it is an obstinate setting up the *Self-Will* of frail, finite, and fallible Creatures; as in Opposition to the eternal Reason of Things, the unprejudiced Judgment of their own Minds, and the general Good and Welfare both of Themselves and their Fellow-creatures; so also in Opposition to the *Will* of the Supreme Author and Creator of all Things, who gave them their Beings and all the Powers and Faculties they are indued with: in Opposition to the *Will* of the All-wise Preserver and Governour of the Universe, on whose gracious Protection they depend every moment for the preservation and continuance of their Beings: and in Opposition to the *Will* of their greatest Benefactor, to whose Bounty they wholly owe whatever they enjoy at present, and all the Hopes of what they expect hereafter. This is the highest of all Aggravations; The utmost Unreasonableness, joyned with obstinate Disobedience and with the greatest Ingratitude.

III. Though the fore-mentioned eternal Moral Obligations, are incumbent indeed on all rational Creatures, antecedent to any respect
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of particular Reward or Punishment; yet they must certainly and necessarily be attended with Rewards and Punishments; Because the same Reasons, which prove God himself to be necessarily Just and Good; and the rules of Justice, Equity and Goodness, to be his unalterable Will, Law and Command, to all created Beings; prove also that he cannot but be pleased with and approve such creatures as imitate and obey him by observing those rules, and be displeased with such as act contrary thereto; and consequently that he cannot but some way or other, make a suitable Difference in his dealings with them; and manifest his Supreme Power and absolute Authority, in finally supporting, maintaining, and vindicating effectually the honour of these his Divine Laws; as becomes the Just and Righteous Governour and Disposer of all Things.

This Proposition also is in a manner Self-evident.

For 1st, if God is himself necessarily ^{That the} a Being (as has been before shown) of in- ^{Practise of} finite Goodness, Justice and Holiness: ^{Virtue or} And if the same reasons which prove the ^{Vice must} Necessity of these Attributes in God him- ^{be attend-} self, prove moreover (as has likewise been ^{ed with} shown already,) that the same Moral Ob- ^{Rewards} ligations must needs be his positive Will, ^{and Pu-} Law and Command, to all rational Crea- ^{nishments,} tures; It follows also necessarily, by ^{proved} the very same Argument, that He can- ^{from the} not but be *Pleased with* and *Approve* such ^{Attributes} Creatures, as imitate and obey him by ^{of God.} observing those Rules; and be *Displeased* with such, as act contrary thereto. And
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if so; then in the Nature of the thing it self it is evident, that having absolute Power and uncontrollable Authority, as being Supreme Governour and Disposer of all Things, He cannot but *Signify*, by some means or other, his Approbation of the one, and his Displeasure against the other. And this, can no way be done to any effectual purpose, but by the Annexing of respective *Rewards and Punishments*. Wherefore if Virtue go finally *unrewarded*, and Wickedness *unpunished*; then God never *Signifies* his Approbation of the one, nor his Displeasure against the other; and if so, then there remains no sufficient proof, that he is really at all *Pleased or Displeased* with either; And the consequence of That, will be, that there is no reason to think the one to be his *Will and Command*, or that the other is *forbidden* by him; Which being once supposed, there will no longer remain any certain evidence of his own *Moral Attributes*. Contrary to what has been already demonstrated.

And from the Necessity there is, that there should be some Vindication of the Honour of God's Laws and Government.

2. The Certainty of *Rewards and Punishments* in general, may also somewhat otherwise be deduced from their being necessary to support the *Honour of God* and of his *Laws and Government*; in the following manner. 'Tis manifest we are obliged in the highest Ties of *Duty and Gratitude*, to pay all possible *Honour* to God, from whom we received our Being, and all our Powers and Faculties, and whatever else we enjoy: Now 'tis plain likewise, that

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we have no other way to Honour God, (whose Happiness is capable of no Addition from any thing that any of his Creatures are capable of doing,) than by Honouring, that is, by Obeying, his Laws: The Honour therefore that is thus done to his Laws, God is pleased to accept as done immediately to himself: And though we were indeed absolutely obliged in Duty to honour him in this manner, notwithstanding that there had been no Reward to be expected thereupon; yet it is necessary in the Government of the World, and well-becoming an infinitely wise and good Governour, that those who Honour Him he should Honour, that is, should distinguish them with suitable marks of his Favour: On the contrary: Though nothing that weak and Finite Creatures are able to do, can in the least diminish from the absolute Glory and Happiness of God; yet, as to Us, the dishonouring, that is, the disobeying his Laws, is a dishonouring of Himself; that is, 'tis, as much as in Us lies, a despising his Supreme Authority, and bringing his Government into Contempt. Now the same reason that there is, why Honour should be paid to the Laws of God at all; the same reason there is, that That Honour should be vindicated, after it has been diminished and infringed by Sin; For no Law-giver who has Authority to require Obedience to his Laws, can or ought to see his Laws despised and dishonoured, without taking some measures to vindicate the Honour of them, for the

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support and dignity of his own Authority, and Government: And the only way, by which the Honour of a Law, or of its Author, can be vindicated after it has been infringed by wilful Sin, is either by the *Repentance and Reformation* of the Transgressor, or by his *Punishment and Destruction*: So that God is necessarily obliged, in vindication of the Honour of his Laws and Government, to Punish those who presumptuously and impenitently disobey his Commandments. Wherefore if there be no distinction made by suitable *Rewards and Punishments*, between those who obey the Laws of God, and those who obey them not; then God suffers the Authority of his Laws to be finally trampled upon and despised without ever making any Vindication of it. Which being impossible; it will follow that these things are not really the Laws of God, and that he has no such regard to them as we imagine: And the consequence of this, must needs be the denial of his *Moral Attributes*; Contrary, as before, to what has been already proved. And consequently the Certainty of *Rewards and Punishments* in general, is necessarily established.

IV. Though, in order to establish this suitable Difference between the Fruits or Effects of Virtue and Vice, so reasonable in it self, and so absolutely necessary for the Vindication of the Honour of God; the Nature of Things, and the Constitution and Order of God's Creation, was originally such, that the observance of

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of the eternal Rules of Justice, Equity and Goodness, does indeed of it self tend by direct and natural consequence to make all Creatures happy; and the contrary practise, to make them miserable: Tet since, through some great and general Corruption and Depravation, (whencesoever That may have arisen,) the condition of Men in this present State is such, that the natural Order of things in this World is in event manifestly perverted, and Virtue and Goodness are visibly prevented in great measure from obtaining their proper and due Effects in establishing Mens Happiness proportionable to their Behaviour and Practise; Therefore it is absolutely impossible, that the whole View and Intention, the original and the final Design, of God's creating such rational Beings as Men are, and placing them on this Globe of Earth, as the chief and principal, or indeed (to speak more properly) the only Inhabitants, for whose sake alone this part at least of the Creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated; It is absolutely impossible (I say) that the whole of God's Design in all this, should be nothing more than to keep up eternally a Succession of such short-lived Generations of Men, as we at present are; and those in such a corrupt, confused and disorderly State of Things, as we see the World is now in; without any due Observation, of the eternal Rules of Good and Evil; without any clear and remarkable Effect, of the great and most necessary Differences of Things; and without any final Vindication of the Honour and Laws of God in the proportionable Reward of the best, or Punishment of the worst of Men: And consequently it is certain and

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necessary, (even as certain as the moral Attributes of God before demonstrated,) that instead of the continuing an eternal Succession of new Generations in the present Form and State of Things, there must at some time or other be such a Revolution and Renovation of Things, such a Future State of existence of the same Persons, as that by an exact distribution of Rewards and Punishments therein, all the present disorders and inequalities may be set right; and that the whole Scheme of Providence, which to Us who judge of it by only one small portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and confused; may appear at its consummation, to be a design worthy of infinite Wisdom, Justice and Goodness.

That according to the original Constitution of things, Virtue and Vice are attended with Natural Rewards and Punishments.

1. In order to establish a just and suitable Difference between the respective Fruits or Effects of Virtue and Vice; the Nature of Things, and the Constitution and Order of God's Creation, was originally such, that the Observance of the eternal Rules of Piety, Justice, Equity, Goodness and Temperance, does of it self plainly tend by direct and natural Consequence, to make all Creatures happy; and the contrary Practise, to make them miserable. This is evident in general, because the practise of universal Virtue, is (an imitation of the Divine Goodness) the practice of that which is *Best* in the whole; and That which tends to the benefit of the whole, must of necessary consequence originally and in its own Nature, tend also to the benefit of every individual Part of the Creation. More particularly: A frequent and habitual Contemplating the infinite

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ly excellent *Perfections* of the All-mighty Creator, and All-wise Governour of the World, and our most bountiful Benefactor; so as to excite in our Minds a suitable Adoration, Love, and Imitation of those Perfections: A regular *employing* all our Powers and Faculties, in such designs and to such purposes only, as they were originally fitted and intended for by Nature: And a due *subjecting* all our Appetites and Passions, to the Government of sober and modest Reason: are evidently the directest means to obtain such settled Peace and solid Satisfaction of Mind, as is the first Foundation, and the Principal and most necessary Ingredient of all true Happiness. The temperate and moderate injoyment of all the good things of this present World, and of the pleasures of Life, according to the measures of right Reason and simple Nature; is plainly and confessedly the certainest and most direct Method, to preserve the Health and Strength of the Body. And the practise of universal Justice, Equity and Benevolence; is manifestly (as has been before observed) as direct and adequate a means to promote the general well fare and Happiness of Men in Society, as any Physical Motion, or Geometrical Operation, is to produce its natural Effect. So that if all Men were truly Virtuous, and practised these Rules in such manner, that the Miseries and Calamities arising usually from the numberless Follies and Vices of Men, were prevented; undoubtedly this great truth would evidence it self visibly in Fact, and appear experimentally in the

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happy State and condition of the World. On the contrary: Neglect of God, and Insensibleness of our Relation and Duty towards him; Abuse and unnatural misapplication, of the Powers and Faculties of our Minds; Inordinate Appetites, and unbridled and furious Passions; necessarily fill the Mind with Confusion, Trouble, and Vexation: And Intemperance, naturally brings Weakness, Pains, and Sickneses into the Body: And mutual Injustice and Iniquity; Fraud, Violence and Oppression; Wars, and Desolations; Murders, Rapine, and all kinds of Cruelty; are sufficiently plain causes of the Miseries and Calamities of Men in Society. So that the original Constitution, Order and Tendency of Things, is evidently enough fitted and designed, to establish naturally a just and suitable Difference in general between Virtue and Vice, by their respective Fruits or Effects.

But that now in this present World, the natural Order of things is so perverted, that Vice often flourishes in great prosperity, and Virtue falls under the greatest calamities of Life.

2. But tho' originally the Constitution and Order of God's Creation was indeed such, that Virtue and Vice are by the regular Tendency of Things, followed with natural Rewards and Punishments: Yet in Event, through some great and general Corruption and Depravation, (whencesoever That may have arisen, of which more hereafter;) the condition of Men in the present State is plainly such, that this natural Order of things in the World is manifestly perverted; Virtue and Goodness are visibly prevented in great measure from obtaining their proper and due Effect, in establishing Mens happiness proportionable to their Behaviour and Practice; and

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Wickedness and Vice very frequently escape the Punishment, which the general nature and disposition of Things *tends* to annex unto it. Wicked Men, by Stupidity, Inconsiderateness, and Sensual Pleasure, often make shift to silence the reproaches of Conscience; and feel very little of that confusion and remorse of Mind, which ought naturally to be consequent upon their vitious Practises. By accidental Strength and Robustness of Constitution; they frequently escape the natural ill consequences of Intemperance and Debauchery: and enjoy the same proportion of Health and Vigour, as those who live up to the Rules of strict and unblameable Sobriety. And Injustice and Iniquity, Fraud, Violence and Cruelty, though they are always attended indeed with sufficiently calamitous consequences *in the general*; yet the most of those evil consequences fall not always upon such persons *in particular*, as have the greatest share in the guilt of the Crimes, but very commonly on those that have the least. On the contrary: Virtue and Piety, Temperance and Sobriety, Faithfulness, Honesty and Charity; though they have indeed both in themselves the true Springs of Happiness, and also the greatest probabilities of outward Causes to concur in promoting their temporal Prosperity; though they cannot indeed be prevented from affording a Man the highest Peace and Satisfaction of Spirit, and many other advantages both of Body and Mind in respect of his own particular Person: Yet

in respect of those Advantages which the mutual Practise of social Virtues ought to produce in common, it is in experience found true, that the Vices of a great part of Mankind do so far prevail against Nature and Reason, as frequently to oppress the Virtue of the Best; and not only hinder them from injoying those publick Benefits, which would naturally and regularly be the consequences of their Virtue; but oft-times bring upon them the greatest temporal Calamities, even for the sake of that very Virtue. For it is but too well known, that Good Men are very often afflicted and impoverished, and made a prey to the Covetousness and Ambition of the Wicked; and sometimes most cruelly and maliciously persecuted, even upon the account of their Goodness it self. In all which affairs, the Providence of God seems not very evidently to interpose for the Protection of the Righteousness. And not only so; but even in Judgments also, which seem more immediately to be inflicted by the Hand of Heaven, it frequently suffers the Righteous to be involved in the same Calamities with the Wicked, as they are mixed together in Business and the Affairs of the World.

That therefore there must needs be a Future State of Rewards and Punishments.

3. Which things being so; (*viz.* that there is plainly in Event no sufficient distinction made between Virtue and Vice; no proportionable and certain Reward annexed to the one, nor Punishment to the other, in this present World :) And yet it being no

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less undeniably certain in the general, as has been before shown, that if there be a God, (and That God be himself a Being of infinite Justice and Goodness; and it be his Will that all rational Creatures should imitate his moral Perfections; and he

* cannot but see and take notice how every Creature behaves it self; and cannot but be accordingly pleased with such as obey his Will and imitate his nature, and be displeased with such as act contrary thereto;) It being certain, I say, that if these things be so, God must needs, in vindication of the Honour of his Laws and Government, signify at some time or other this his Approbation or Displeasure, by making finally a suitable Difference between those who obey him, and

those who obey him not: It follows unavoidably, either that all these Notions which we frame concerning God, are false; and that there is no Providence, and God sees not, or at least has no regard to what is done by his Creatures, and consequently the ground of all his own moral Attributes is taken away, and even his Being it self; or else that there must necessarily be a Future State of Rewards and Punishments after this Life, wherein all the present Difficulties of Providence shall be cleared up, by an exact and impartial Administration of

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Justice,

* Εἰ δὲ μὴ λαμβάνετο
τὸς θεός, ὃ μὲν δικαιο-
φιλὴς ἐν οἷῳ, ὃ δὲ δικαιο-
μιστὴς. — Τὸ δὲ δικαιοφί-
λου γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γίγνεται,
πάντα γίγνεται ὡς οἶόν τι ἄ-
εστα. — Οὕτως ἀγαθὸν πολὺ π-
λέον ἢ τὸ δίκαιον ἀνδρὸς,
ἐάν τ' ἐν πνεύματι γίγνεται,
ἐάν τ' ἐν νόμοις, ἢ πνεύματι
καὶ ἀνθρώπων κακῶν ὡς τὸ
ταῦτα εἰς ἀγαθὸν πτελεῖται.
Οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἡ ἀποδομις. Οὐ
γὰρ ἡ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ποτὶ ἀμε-
λείας ὅς ἐν ἀποδομίδι
ἐδέχθη δικαιοσύνη γίγνεται, καὶ
ἐπιτηδεύων ἀρετῶν εἰς ὅσον
σωμάτων ἀνδραγαθῶν ὁμοιωθεὶς
θεῷ. Plato de Republ. lib.
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Justice. But now, that these Notions are True; that there is a God, and a Providence, and that God is himself a Being indued with all moral Perfections, and expects and commands that all his rational Creatures should govern all their Actions by the same Rules; has been particularly and distinctly proved already. It is therefore directly Demonstrated, that there must be a Future State of Rewards and Punishments. *Let not thine heart envy Sinners; but be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the day long; For surely there is a Reward, and thine Expectation shall not be cut off,* Prov. 23. 17 & 18.

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Stoical O-
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ciency of
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4. This Argument is indeed a common one; but it is nevertheless strongly conclusive and unanswerable: So that, whoever denies a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, must of necessity by a chain of unavoidable Consequences be forced to recur to downright Atheism. The only middle Opinion that can be invented, is that Assertion of the *Stoicks*, that Virtue is *Self-Sufficient* to its own Happiness, and a full Reward to it self in all Cases, even under the greatest Sufferings that can befall a Man for its sake. Men who were not Certain of a Future State (though most of them did indeed believe it highly probable;) and yet would not give up the Cause of Virtue; had no other way left to defend it, than by asserting that it was in all Cases and under all Circumstances, absolutely *Self-sufficient* to its own Happiness: Whereas on the contrary, because it is manifestly *not Self-sufficient*, and yet undoubtedly the Cause of Virtue is not to be given up; there

therefore they ought from thence to have concluded the *Certainty* of a Future State. That Virtue is truly *worthy* to be chosen, even merely for its own sake, without any respect to any recompense or reward; must indeed necessarily be acknowledged. But it does not from hence follow, that He who *Dies* for the sake of Virtue, is really any more *Happy*, than he that dies for any fond Opinion or any unreasonable Humour or Obstinacy whatsoever; if he has no other Happiness than the bare Satisfaction arising from the Sense of his resoluteness in persisting to preserve his Virtue, and in adhering immoveably to what he judges to be right; and there be no Future State wherein he may reap any Benefit of that his resolute perseverance. On the contrary, it will only follow, that God has made Virtue necessarily amiable, and such as Men's Judgment and Conscience can never but choose; and yet that he has not annexed to it any sufficient encouragement, to support Men effectually in that Choice. Brave indeed and admirable were the Things which some of the Philosophers have said upon this Subject; and which some very few extraordinary Men (of which *Regulus* is a remarkable Instance) seem to have made good in their Practise, even beyond the common Abilities of humane Nature: But 'tis very plain (as I before hinted) that the general Practise of Virtue in the World, can never be supported upon this Foot; It being indeed neither possible nor truly reasonable, that Men by adhering to Vir-
tue

* Οὐκ ἴδμεν ὅπως μακρὴς ὑπολάβω τὰς μηδὲν ἀπολαύσαντας ἡ ἀρετὴς ἀγαθόν, δι' αὐτὴν δὲ ταύτῃ ἀποκομμένους. *Dionys. Halicarn.*

tue should part with their Lives, if * thereby they eternally deprived themselves of all possibility of receiving any Advantage from that adherence. Vir-

tue, 'tis true, in its proper Seat, and with all its full Effects and Consequences unhindered; must be confessed to be the chief Good; as being truly the Enjoyment, as well as the Imitation of God: But, as the

† Porro ipsa Virtus, cum ubi bonorum culmen vendicet humanorum, quid hic agit nisi perpetua bella cum vitiis; nec exterioribus, sed interioribus; nec alienis, sed plane nostris & propriis. — Absit ergo, ut quamdiu in hoc bello intestino sumus, jam nos beatitudinem, ad quam vincendo volumus pervenire, adeptos esse credamus. *Augustin. de Civitate Dei, lib. 19. c. 4.*

Non enim virtus ipsa est *Summum Bonum*, sed effectrix & mater est summi boni; quoniam perveniri ad illud sine virtute non potest. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

† Practice of it is circumstantiated in this present World, and in the present State of things; 'tis plain it is not it self the chief Good, but only the means to it; as Running in a Race, is not it self the Prize, but the way to obtain it.

From whence the Certainty of a Future State is again concluded.

5. 'Tis therefore absolutely impossible, that the whole View and Intention, the original and the final design of God's creating such rational Beings as Men are; endued with such noble Faculties, and so necessarily conscious of the eternal and unchangeable Differences of Good and Evil: 'Tis absolutely impossible (I say) that the whole Design of an infinitely Wise and Just and Good God, in all this, should

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be nothing more than to keep up eternally a Succession of new Generations of Men; and those in such a corrupt, confused, and disorderly State of Things, as we see the present World is in; without any due and regular Observation, of the eternal Rules of Good and Evil; without any clear and remarkable Effect, of the great and most necessary Differences of things; without any sufficient Discrimination of Virtue and Vice, by their proper and respective Fruits; and without any final Vindication of the Honour and Laws of God, in the proportionable Reward of the Best, or Punishment of the Worst of Men. And consequently it is certain and necessary, (even as certain as the moral Attributes of God before demonstrated,) that instead of the continuing an eternal Succession of new Generations in the present Form and State of Things, there must at some time or other be such a Revolution and Renovation of Things, such a *Future State* of existence of the same Persons, as that by an exact distribution of Rewards and Punishments therein, all the present Disorders and Inequalities may be set right; and that the whole Scheme of Providence, which to Us who judge of it by only one small Portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and much confused; may appear at its Consummation, to be a design worthy of infinite Wisdom, Justice and Goodness.

Without this, All * comes to Nothing. If this Scheme be once broken; there is no Justice, no Goodness,

* Ita fit, ut si ab illa rerum Summa, quam superius comprehendimus, aberraveris; omnis ratio intereat, & ad nihilum omnia revertantur. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

no Order, no Reason, nor any thing upon which any Argument in moral Matters can be founded, left in the World. Nay, even though we should set aside all consideration of the *Moral* Attributes of God, and consider only his *Natural* Perfections, his infinite Knowledge and Wisdom, as Framer and Builder of the World; it would even in That View only, appear infinitely improbable, that God should have created such Beings as Men are, and indued them with such excellent Faculties, and placed them on this Globe of Earth, as the only Inhabitants for whose sake this part at least of the Creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated; and all this

† Non enim temere, nec fortuito sari & creati sumus; sed profecto fuit quædam vis, quæ generi consuleret humano, nec id gigneret aut aleret, quod cum exantlavisset omnes labores, tum incideret in mortis malum sempiternum. *Cic. Tusc. Quest. lib. 1.*

without any further Design, than † only for the maintaining a perpetual Succession of such short-lived Generations of Mortals, as we at present are; to live in the utmost confusion and disorder for a

very few Years, and then Perish eternally into Nothing. What * can be imagined more vain and empty? what more absurd? what more void of all Marks of Wisdom, than the Fabrick of the World, and the Creation of Mankind, upon this Supposition? But then, take in also the Consideration of the

* Si sine causa gignimur; si in hominibus procreandis providentia nulla versatur, si casu nobismetipsis ac voluptatis nostræ gratia nascimur; si nihil post mortem sumus: quid potest esse tam supervacuum, tam inanè, tam vanum, quam humana res est, quam mundus ipse? *Laëtant. lib. 7.*

Moral Attributes of God; and it amounts (as I have said) to a complete

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pleat Demonstration, that there must be a
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6. It may here at first sight seem to be a very strange thing, that through the whole System of Nature, in the material, in the inanimate, in the irrational part of the Creation, every single thing should have in it self so many and so obvious, so evident and undeniable marks, of the infinitely accurate Skill and Wisdom of their Almighty Creator; that from the brightest Star in the Firmament of Heaven, to the meanest Pebble upon the Face of the Earth, there is no one piece of Matter which does not afford such instances of admirable Artifice and exact Proportion and Contrivance, as exceeds all the Wit of Man, (I do not say to imitate, but even) ever to be able fully to search out and comprehend; And yet, that in the management of the rational and moral World, for the sake of which all the rest was created, and is preserved only to be subservient to it; there should not in many Ages be plain Evidences enough, either of the Wisdom, or of the Justice and Goodness of God, or of so much as the interposition of his divine Providence at all; to convince Mankind clearly and generally of the World's being under his immediate Care, Inspection and Government. This, I say, may indeed at first sight seem very wonderful. But if we consider the matter more closely and attentively; it will appear not to be so strange and astonishing, as we are apt to imagine.

Why the Wisdom of God is not so clearly and plainly seen in his Government of the Moral, as in the Fabric of the Natural World.

imagine. For, as in a great *Machine*, contrived by the skill of a consummate Artificer, fitted up and adjusted with all conceivable Accuracy for some very difficult and deep-projected Design, and polished and fine-wrought in every part of it, with admirable niceness and dexterity; any Man who saw and examined one or two Wheels thereof, could not fail to observe in those single parts of it, the admirable Art and exact skill of the Work-man; and yet the Excellency of the End or Use for which the whole was contrived, he would not at all be able, even though he was himself also a skilful Artificer, to discover and comprehend, without seeing the Whole fitted up and put together: So though in every part of the *natural World*, considered even single and unconnected, the Wisdom of the great Creator sufficiently appears; yet his Wisdom and Justice and Goodness in the Disposition and Government of the *moral World*, which necessarily depends on the Connexion and Issue of the whole Scheme, cannot perhaps be distinctly and fully comprehended by any Finite and Created Beings, much less by frail and weak and short lived Mortals, before the Period and Accomplishment of certain great Revolutions. But 'tis exceedingly reasonable to believe, that as the Great Discoveries which by the Diligence and Sagacity of later Ages have been made in Astronomy and *Natural Philosophy*, have opened surprizing Scenes of the Power and Wisdom of the Creator, beyond what Men could possibly have conceived or imagined.

imagined in Former Times: so at the unfolding of the whole Scheme of Providence in the Conclusion of this present State, Men will be surprized with the amazing Manifestations of Justice and Goodness, which will then appear to have run through the whole Series of God's Government of the Moral World.

This is the chief and greatest Argument, on which the natural Proof of a Future state of Rewards and Punishments, must principally be founded. Yet there are also several other collateral Evidences, which jointly conspire to render the same Thing extremely credible to mere natural Reason. As

1st. There is very great Reason, even *Of the Immortality of the Soul; and the natural Proofs we have of it.* from the bare Nature of the Thing it self, to believe the Soul to be immortal; Separate from all moral Arguments drawn from the Attributes of God; and without any Consideration of the general System of the World, or of the Universal Order and Constitution, Connexion and Dependencies of Things. The Immortality of the Soul, has been commonly believed in

* all Ages and in all Places, by the unlearned part of all civilized People, and by the almost general consent of all the most barbarous Nations under Heaven; from a Tradition so ancient and so universal, as cannot be conceived to owe its original either to Chance or to vain Imagination, or to any other Cause than to the Author of Nature Himself:

* Et primum quidem omnium Antiquitate, &c. Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.

And

† Demon-
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God. See
also a Let-
ter to Mr
Dodwel,
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several An-
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Replies.

And the most *learned and thinking* part of Mankind, at all times and in all Coun-tries, where the Study of Philosophy has been in any measure cultivated, have pre-ty generally agreed, that it is capable of a just Proof from the abstract consid-eration of the *Nature and Operations* of the Soul it self. That none of the known Qualities of *Matter* can in any possible Variation, Division, or composition, pro-duce *Sense* and *Thought* and *Reason*; is abundantly evident, as has been demon-strated in the former † Discourse. That *Matter* consists of innumerable, divisible, separable, and for the most part actually disjoyned Parts; is acknowledged by all Philosophers. That the *Powers and Facul-ties of the Soul*, being the most remote and distant from all the known Properties of *Matter*, that can be imagined; 'tis at least a putting great violence upon our Rea-son, to imagine them superadded by Om-nipotence to one and the same Substance; cannot easily be denied. That 'tis highly unreasonable and absurd, to suppose the Soul made up of innumerable Consciouf-nesses, as Matter is necessarily made up of innumerable Parts; and on the contra-ry, that 'tis highly reasonable to believe the *seat of Thought* to be a simple Substance, such as cannot naturally be divided and crumbled into Pieces, as all Matter is manifestly subject to be; must of neces-sity be confessed. Consequently the Soul will not be liable to be dissolved at the dis-solution of the *Body*: And therefore it will naturally

naturally be Immortal. All this seems to follow, at least with the highest degree of probability, from the single consideration of the Souls being endued with Sense, Thought or Consciousness. I cannot imagine,

saith * Cyrus, in that Speech which Xenophon relates he made to his Children a little before his Death, that the Soul while it is in this Mortal Body, lives; and that when it is separated from it, then it should die: I cannot persuade my self, that the Soul, by being separated from this Body which is devoid of Sense, should thereupon be-

come itself likewise devoid of Sense: On the contrary, it seems to me more reasonable to believe, that when the Mind is separated from the Body, Then it should become most of all sensible and intelligent; Thus He. But then further, if we take also into the Consideration all the higher and nobler Faculties, Capacities and Improvements of the Soul; the argument will still become much stronger:

I am persuaded, saith † Cicero, when I consider with what Swiftness of Thought the Soul is indued, with what wonderful Memory of Things past, and fore-cast of Things to come; how many Arts, how many Sciences, how many wonderful Inventions it has

* Οὐτοι ἔγωγε, ὅτι μάλιστα, εἴτε τὸ πῶποτε ἐπισθῶ, ὥς ἢ ψυχὴ, εἴως ἂν εἰς θνήσκῃ σῶματι ἢ, (ἢ ὅταν ὅ τῆς ἀπὸλλῶν, τεθνήσκῃ. -- Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὅπως ἀφ' ὧν ἔσαι ἢ ψυχὴ ἐπισθῶν τῷ ἀφ' ὧν σῶματος διχα γένηται, εἴτε τὸ πῶποτε περὶ σῶμα. Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἀφ' ὧν καὶ καὶ εἰς ὅν ὁ νῦν ἐκκερσθῇ, τότε καὶ φερεμὸς τῶν εἰκῶν αὐτὸν εἶναι. Cyrus apud Xeni.

† Quid multa? Sic mihi persuasi, sic sentio; quum tanta celeritas animorum sit, tanta memoria prateritorum, futurorum providentia, tot artes, tantæ scientiæ, tot inventa; non posse eam naturam, quæ res eas continet, esse mortalem. Cic. de senectute.

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found

found out; that That Nature, which is Possessor of such Faculties, cannot be Mortal. A-

* Quod & præterita tenear, & futura provideat, & complecti possit præsentia; hæc divina sunt: Nec invenietur unquam, unde ad hominem venire possint, nisi a Deo. Idem Tusc. Quest. lib. 1.

gain; The Memory, saith he, which the Soul has of Things that have been, and its Foresight of Things that will be, and its large Comprehension of things that at present are, are plainly divine Powers: Nor can the

Wit of Man ever invent any way, by which these Faculties could possibly come to be in Men, but by immediate Communication from

God. Again; Tho' we see not, saith he, the Soul of Man, as indeed neither are we able to see God; Yet, from the Works of God we are certain of his Being; from the Faculties of the Soul, its Memory, its Invention, its Swiftmess of Thought, its noble Exercise of all Vi-

|| Mentem hominis, quamvis eam non videas, ut Deum non vides; tamen, ut Deum agnoscis ex operibus ejus, sic ex memoria rerum & inventioe & celeritate Motus, omnique pulchritudine virtutis, vim divinam Mentis agnoscito. Id. ibid.

tues, we cannot but be convinced of its divine original and nature. And, speaking of the Strength and Beauty of that Argument, which from the wonderful Faculties and Capacities of the Soul, concludes it to be of an Immaterial and Immortal Nature; Tho' all the vulgar and little Phi-

losophers in the World, saith he, (for so I cannot but call all such, as dissent from

† Licet concurrant plebei omnes philosophi, (sic enim ii qui a Platone & Socrate & ab illa familia dissent, appellandi videntur;) non modo nihil unquam tam ganter explicabunt, sed ne hoc quidem ipsum quam subtile conclusum sit intelligent. Id. ibid.

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Plato and Socrates and those superior Geniuses,) should put their Heads together; they will not only never, while they live, be able to explain any thing so neatly and elegantly; but even this Argument it self, they will never have understanding enough fully to perceive and comprehend, how neat and beautiful and strong it is. The chief Prejudice against the belief of the Souls existing thus and living, after the Death of the Body; and the Summ of all the Objections brought against this Doctrine by the Epicurean Philosophers of old, who denied the Immortality of the Soul; and by certain Atheistical Persons of late, who differ very little from them in their manner of reasoning; is This:

That they * cannot apprehend how the Soul can have any Sense or Perception, without the Body wherein evidently are all the Organs of Sense. But neither || can they any better apprehend or explain how the Soul in the Body, that is, the Body it self, according to their Opinion,) is capable of Sense or Perception, by means of the Organs of Sense. And besides: This Argument, that the Soul can have no Perception, when all the ways of Perception that we have at present Ideas of,

* — Si immortalis natura animæ est,

Et sentire potest secreta a corpore nostro;

Quin; (ut opinor) eam faciundum est sensibus autem:

— At neq; seorsum oculi, &c.

Lucret. lib 3.

Quod autem corpus animæ per se? quæ materia? ubi cogitatio illi? quomodo visus? auditus? aut qui tangit? qui usus ejus? aut quod sine his bonum? Plin. lib. 7.

Neq; aliud est quidquam cur incredibilis his animarum videatur æternitas, nisi quod nequeunt qualis sit animus vacans corpore intelligere & cogitatione comprehendere. Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.

|| Quasi vero intelligentes

are

qualis sit in ipso corpore.
— Mihi quidem naturam
animi intuenti, multo dif-
ficilior occurrit cogitatio,
multoq; obscurior, qualis
animus in corpore sit, quam
qualis cum exterit. *Id. ibid.*

are removed; is exactly the
very same Argument, and
no other, than what a
Man born blind might
make use of with the very
same force, to prove that
none of Us can possibly
have in our present Bodies any Perception
of Light or Colours; as I
have explained more par-
ticularly in the † former
Discourse.

† Demonstration of the Be-
ing and Attributes of God,
pag. 86, &c.

The natu-
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This consideration, of the Souls ap-
pearing in all Reason to be naturally im-
mortal, afforded great Pleasure and Sa-
tisfaction to the wisest and soberest Men in
the Heathen World; was a great Support
under Calamities and Sufferings, especially
under such as Men brought upon them-
selves by being Virtuous; filled them
with great hopes and comfortable expecta-
tions of what was to come hereafter; and
was a mighty encouragement to the pra-
ctise of all moral Virtue, and particularly
to take pains in subduing the Body and
keeping it in subjection to the Reason of
the Mind. First, It afforded great Plea-
sure and Satisfaction, to the wisest and
soberest Men in the Heathen World, from
the bare Contemplation of the Thing it

self. No Body, saith * Cicero,
shall ever drive Me from the
Hope of Immortality: And,

* Sed Me nemo de im-
mortalitate depellet. Cic.
Tusc. Quest. lib. 1.

† Quod si in hoc erro,
quod animos hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro,
nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorquem
volo. *Idem de senectute.*

If this my Opinion concerning the Immortality of the Soul, should at last prove an Error; yet it is a very delightful Error; And I will never suffer my self to be undeceived in so pleasing an Opinion, as long as I live. Secondly, It was a great Support to them under Calamities and Sufferings, especially under such as Men brought upon themselves by being Virtuous: These and the like Contemplations, saith

|| Cicero, had such an Effect upon Socrates, that when he was tried for his Life, he neither desired any Advocate to plead his Cause, nor made any supplication to his Judges for Mercy; and on the very last day of his Life, made many excellent Discourses upon this Subject; and a few days before, when he had an opportunity offered him

to have escaped out of Prison, he would not lay bold of it: For thus he believed, and thus he taught; that when the Souls of Men depart out of their Bodies, they go two different ways; the Virtuous to a place of Happiness, the Wicked and the Sensual to Misery. Thirdly, it filled them with great Hopes, and comfortable Expectations of what was to come hereafter: O

happy Day, saith * the good and Man in Cicero, when I shall go to that blessed Assembly of Spirits, and depart out of this wicked and miser-

|| His & talibus adductus Socrates, nec patronum quæsit ad iudicium capitis, nec iudicibus supplex fuit; & supremo vitæ die, de hoc ipso multa disseruit; & paucis ante diebus, cum facile posset educi e custodia, noluit. — Ita enim censebat, itaq, disseruit, duas esse vias, duplicesq, cursus animorum, e corpore excedentium, &c. Id. Tusculanæ Quæst. lib. 1.

* O præclarum diem, quum in illud animorum concilium cærumq, proficiscar, & quum ex hac turba & colluvione discedam! Idem de Senect.

rably confused World! Lastly, It was a mighty encouragement to the practise of all moral Virtue, and particularly to take pains in subduing the Body and keeping it in subjection to the Reason of the Mind:

† Χρη πάντα ποιεῖν ὥς εἰς ἀρετῆς καὶ φρονήσεως ἐν τῷ βίῳ μεταχεῖν καλὸν καὶ τὸ εὖ ζῆν, καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς μεγάλη. Plato in Phædone.

oned up the temporal Advantages of Virtue in the present World,

|| Καὶ μὴ τὰ γε μέγιστα ἐπιχειρεῖ ἀρετῆς καὶ φρονήσεως ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὴν δαίμονα. — Τί δ' ἂν ἔν γε ὀλίγῳ χεῖν μέγα ἦτο; πᾶς γὰρ ὁ τὸς γε ὁ ἐκ παιδὸς μέχει πρεσβύτερος χρόνος πρὸς πάντα ὀλίγον πᾶς ἂν εἴη, Plato de Republ. lib. 10.

world, being inconsiderable and nothing in comparison of Eternity. And again; These

* Ταῦτα πίνω ἑδὲν ἐκ πλάθῃ ἑδὲ μεγεθεῖ πρὸς οὐκ ἔνα ἀπὸ τῶν πάντων ἐκαστὸν ἀνθρώπου. Idem. ibid.

which attend Men after Death. And,

† Οἱ μὴ ἀεὶ νίκης ἐνεκα πάλης καὶ δρόμων καὶ ἄλλων ποικίλων, ἐτόλμισαν ἀπὸ χεῖρας. — Οἱ δ' ἡμῖνες παῖδες ἀσπαστήσασιν καρτερεῖν, πολὺ καλλίον ἐνεκα νίκης; Plato de Legib. lib. 8.

We ought to spare no Pains, faith † Plato, to obtain the Habit of Virtue and Wisdom in this Life; for the Prize is noble, and the Hope is very great. Again; having reck-

oned up the temporal Advantages of Virtue in the present World, he adds; || But we have not yet mentioned the greatest and chiefest rewards, which are proposed to Virtue; For what can be truly great, in so small a proportion of Time to the whole Age of the longest Liver in this our present

world, being inconsiderable and nothing in comparison of Eternity. And again; These things, faith * he, are nothing, either in Number or Greatness, in comparison with those Rewards of Virtue and Punishments of Vice

which attend Men after Death. And, mention no more places. They, faith † he, who in the Games hope to obtain Victory in such poor Matters as Wrestling, Running, and the like; think not much to prepare themselves for the

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Contest by great Temperance and Abstinence:
And shall our Scholars in the Study of Vir-
tue, not have courage and resolution enough,
to persevere with Patience, for a far nobler
Prize? Words very like those of St
Paul, 1 Cor. 9. 24. Know ye not, that
they which run in a Race, run all; And
every Man that striveth for the Mastery, is
temperate in all things? Now they do it to
obtain a corruptible Crown, but we an incor-
ruptible.

2. Another Argument which may be ^{The Argu-}
used in proof of a Future State, so far as ^{ment for}
to amount to a very great probability; is ^{a Future}
That necessary Desire of Immortality, which ^{State,}
seems to be naturally implanted in all ^{drawn}
Men, with an unavoidable Concern for what ^{from Mens}
is to come hereafter. If there be no Ex- ^{natural de-}
istence after this Life, it will seem that ^{sire of Im-}
the irrational Creatures, who always in-
joy the present Good without any Care or
Solicitude for what may happen after-
wards, are better provided for by Nature,
than Men, whose Reason and Foresight,
and all other those very Faculties, by
which they are made more excellent than
Beasts, serve them, upon this Supposition,
scarcely for any other purpose, than to
render them uneasy and uncertain and fear-
ful and solicitous about things which are
not. And it is not at all probable, that
God should have given Men Appetites,
which were never to be satisfied; Desires,
which had no Objects to answer them; and
unavoidable Apprehensions, of what was
never really to come to pass.

Another,
drawn
from Mens
Conscience
or Judg-
ment of
their own
Actions.
Rom. 2. 14
and 15.

3. Another Argument, which may be brought to prove a *Future State*, is That *Conscience* which all Men have of their own Actions, or That inward *Judgment* which they necessarily pass upon them in their own Minds: whereby they that have *not any Law, are a Law unto themselves, their Conscience bearing Witness, and their Thoughts accusing or else excusing one another.* There is no Man, who at any time does good and brave and generous things, but the reason of his own Mind applauds him for so doing; and no Man at any time does things base and vile; dishonourable and wicked, but at the same time he condemns himself in what he does. The one is necessarily accompanied with good Hope, and Expectation of Reward: The other with continual Torment and Fear of Punishment. And hence, as before, it is not probable, that God should have so framed and constituted the Mind of Man, as necessarily to pass upon it self a *Judgment* which shall *never be verified*, and stand perpetually and unavoidably convicted by a *Sentence* which shall *never be confirmed*.

Another,
drawn
from Mans
being by
nature an
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ture.

4. Lastly, Another Argument, which may be drawn from right Reason in proof of a *Future State*, is this; that Man is plainly in his Nature an *Accountable Creature*, and capable of being *Judged*. Those Creatures indeed, whose Actions are all determined by something without themselves, or by what we call mere instinct; as they are not capable of having a Rule given

given them, so 'tis evident that neither can they be accountable for their Actions: But *Man*, who has intirely within himself a free Principle or Power of determining his own Actions upon moral Motives, and has a Rule given him to act by, which is Right Reason; can be, nay, cannot but be, accountable for all his Actions, how far they have been agreeable or disagreeable to that Rule. Every Man, because of the natural Liberty of his Will, *can* and *ought* to govern all his Actions by some certain Rule, and give a Reason for every thing he does. Every moral Action he performs, being Free and without any compulsion or natural necessity, proceeds either from some *Good Motive* or some *Evil* one; is either *conformable to right Reason*, or *contrary to it*; is worthy either of *Praise* or *Dispraise*, and capable either of *Excuse* or *Aggravation*. Consequently it is highly reasonable to be supposed, that since there is a Superiour Being, from whom we received all our Faculties and Powers; and since in the *right Use* or in the *Abuse* of those Faculties, in the governing them by the Rule of right Reason, or in the neglecting that Rule, consist all the moral Difference of our Actions; there will at some time or other be an *Examination* or *Inquiry* made into the grounds and motives and circumstances of our several Actions, how agreeable or disagreeable they have been to the Rule that was given us; and a suitable *Judgment* be passed upon them. Upon these considerations, the Wisest of the

the Antient Heathens believed and taught that the Actions of every particular Person should all be strictly tried and examined after his Death, and he have accordingly a just and impartial Sentence passed upon him. Which Doctrine though the Poets indeed wrapt up in Fables and obscure Riddles, yet the wisest of the Philosophers had a better Notion of it, and more agreeable to Reason. From this

* Ταύτης τ' δίκης ἔτε σὺ
μήποτε, ἢ ἑ εἰ ἀλλ' αἰσυχῆς
γενέσθαι ἐπιβήσεται. — Οὐ γὰρ ἀμε-
ληθήσῃ ποτ' ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἔχ-
ῃ πο σμικρῶν δύση χτ' τὸ τ'
γῆς βάθος. — ἔδ' ὑψηλὸς
γενόμενος εἰς τ' ἔραν ἐν ἀ-
ναπλήσει πόντοις ὃ αὐτῶν τῶν
προσέκλεισαν πμωείαν. εἴτ'
ἐνθάδε μῶραν. εἴτε καὶ ἐν ἀ-
δύ διαπορεύσεις εἴδε καὶ τῶ-
ν εἰς ἀνώτερον ἐπ' ἀνακο-
μῶν τὸ πον. Plato de Le-
git. lib. 10.

Judgment, saith * Plato, let no Man hope to be able to escape: For though you could descend into the very Depth of the Earth, or rise on high to the extremities of the Heavens; yet should you never escape the just Judgment of the Gods, either before, or after Death. An expression very agreeable to that of the Psalmist, Psal. 139. 8, 9,

These, I say, are very good and strong Arguments for the great probability of a Future State: But That drawn, as above, from the consideration of the Moral Attributes of God, seems to amount even to a Demonstration.

V. Though the necessity and indispensableness of all the great and moral Obligations of Natural Religion, and also the Certainty of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, be thus in general deducible, even demonstrably by a Chain of clear and undeniable reasoning

Yet (in the present State of the World, by what means soever it came originally to be so corrupted; the particular Circumstances whereof could not Now be certainly known but by Revelation;) such is the Carelessness, Inconsiderateness, and Want of Attention of the greater part of Mankind; so many the Prejudices and false Notions taken up by evil Education; so strong and violent the unreasonable Lusts, Appetites, and Desires of Sense; and so great the Blindness, introduced by Superstitious Opinions, vicious Customs, and debauched Practices through the World; that very few are able, in reality and effect, to discover these things clearly and plainly for themselves; but Men have great need of particular Teaching, and much Instruction; to convince them of the Truth, and Certainty, and Importance of these things; to give them a due Sense, and clear and just Apprehensions concerning them; and to bring them effectually to the Practice of the plainest and most necessary Duties.

1. There is naturally in the greater part of Mankind, such a prodigious Carelessness, Inconsiderateness, and Want of Attention; as not only hinders them from making use of their Reason, in such manner as to discover these things clearly and effectually for themselves; but is the cause of the grossest and most stupid Ignorance imaginable. Some seem to have little or hardly any Notion of God at all; and More take little or no care to frame just and worthy Apprehensions concerning him, concerning the Divine Attributes and Perfections of his Nature;

Men hindered from discovering and understanding religious Truths, by Carelessness and Want of Attention.

ture; and still many More are entirely negligent and heedless, to consider and discover what may be his *Will*. Few make a due use of their Natural Faculties, to distinguish rightly the essential and unchangeable *Difference* between *Good* and *Evil*; Fewer yet, so attend to the natural Notices which God has given them, as by their own Understanding to collect, that What is *Good* is the express *Will and Command* of God, and what is *Evil* is *Forbidden* by him; And still Fewer consider with themselves the *Weight and Importance* of these Things, the natural *Rewards* or *Punishments* that are frequently annexed in *this Life* to the Practice of *Virtue* or *Vice*, and the much greater and certainer *Difference* that shall be made betwixt them in a *Life to come*. Hence it is, that (as Travellers assure us) even some whole Nations seem to have very little Notion of God, or at least very poor and unworthy Apprehensions concerning him; and a very small Sense of the Obligations of Morality; and very mean and obscure Expectations of a Future State. Not that God has any where left himself wholly without *Witness*; or that the Difference of Good and Evil, is to any rational Being undiscernible; or that Men at any Time or in any Nation, could ever be firmly and generally persuaded in their own Minds, that they perished absolutely at Death: But through *Supine Negligence and Want of Attention*, they

they let their Reason (as it were) sleep, and * are deaf to the Dictates of common Understanding, and, like Brute Beasts, minding only the things that are before their Eyes, never consider any thing that is abstract from Sense, or beyond their present private Temporal Interest. And it were well, if, even in civilized Nations, this was not, very nearly, the case of too many Men, when left entirely to themselves, and void of particular Instruction.

2. The greater part of Mankind are not only *Unattentive*, and barely *Ignorant*; but commonly they have also, through a careless and Evil Education, taken up *early Prejudices*, and many *vain and foolish Notions*; which pervert their natural Understanding, and hinder them from using their Reason in *moral Matters* to any effectual purpose. This cannot be better described, than in the Words of Cicero: If we had come into the World, faith † he, in such Circumstances, as that we could clearly and distinctly have discerned Nature her self, and have been able in the course of our Lives to follow her true and uncorrupted Directions; this alone might have been sufficient, and there would have been little need of Teaching and Instruction:

* Multis signis natura declarat quid velit: — ob-
surdescimus tamen nescio
quo modo, nec audimus. Cic.
de Amicit.

And by
early pre-
judices and
false No-
tions.

† Si tales nos natura genuisset, ut eam ipsam intru-
eri & perspicere, eaq; op-
tima duce cursum vitæ con-
ficere possemus; haud esset
sane quod quisquam ratio-
nem & doctrinam require-
ret. Nunc verò &c. Cic.
Tusc. Quæst. lib. 3.

Nunc parvulos nobis de-
dit igniculos, quos celeriter
malis moribus opinionibusq;

But

depravatis sic restringimus, ut nusquam Naturæ lumen appareat. — Simul atq; educti in Lucem & suscepti sumus, in omni continuo pravitate, & in summa opinionum perveritate versamur; ut pene cum lacte nutricis, errorem fuisse videamur. Cum vero parentibus redditi, deinde magistris traditi sumus, tum ita variis imbuimur erroribus, ut vanitati veritas, & opinioni confirmatæ natura ipsa cedat. — Cum vero accedit eodem, quasi maximus quidem magister, populus, atq; omnis undiq; ad vitia consentiens multitudo; tum plane inficimur opinionum pravitate, a naturaq; ipsa desciscimus. *Ibid.*

with such Variety of Errors, that Truth becomes perfectly overwhelmed with Falshood; and the most natural Sentiments of our Minds, are entirely stifled with confirmed Follies: But when after all this, we enter upon Business in the World, and make the Multitude, conspiring everywhere in Wickedness, our great Guide and Example; then our very Nature it self is wholly transformed, as it were, into corrupt Opinions. A livelier Description of the present corrupt estate of Humane Nature, is not easily to be met with.

And by sensual Appetites, Passions, and worldly Business. 3. In the generality of Men, the Appetites and Desires of Sense are so violent and importunate; the Business and the Pleasures of the World, take up so much of their time; and their Passions are so very strong

But Now Nature has given us only some small Sparks of right Reason, which we so quickly extinguish with corrupt Opinions and evil Practices, that the true Light of Nature no where appears: As soon as we are brought into the World, immediately we dwell in the midst of all Wickedness, and are surrounded with a number of most perverse and foolish Opinions; so that we seem to suck in Error even with our Nurses Milk: Afterwards, when we return to our Parents, and are committed to Tutors; then we are further stocked

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and unreasonable; that, of Themselves, they are very backward and unapt to employ their Reason, and fix their Attention upon moral Matters; and still more backward to apply themselves to the Practise of them. The Love of Pleasure, is (as Aristotle elegantly * expressees it) so nourished up with us from our very Childhood, and so incorporated (as it were) into the whole course of our Lives; that it is very difficult for Men to withdraw their Thoughts from Sensual Objects, and fasten them upon things remote from Sense: And if perhaps they do attend a little, and begin to see the reasonableness of governing themselves by a higher Principle, than mere Sense and Appetite; yet with such † Variety of Temptations are they perpetually incompassed, and continually solicited; and the Strength of Passions and Appetites, makes so great Opposition to the Motions of Reason; that commonly they yield and submit to practise those things, which at the same time the Reason of their own Mind || condemns; and what they allow not, That they Do. Which Observation is so true of too great a part of Mankind, that

* Επὶ τῷ ἐκ νηπίου πάσῃ ἡμῶν σωλῆθεσσι [ἡδονῇ] διδὼν καὶ χαλεπὸν ἀποτελεῖσθαι τὸ τοῦ πάθους, ἐγκλωσμένον τῷ εἶσι. Aristot. Ethic. lib. 2. c. 2.

† Vitia de mercede sollicitant: Avaritia pecuniam promittit: Luxuria multas ac varias voluptates: Ambitio purpuram & plausum: & ex hoc potentiam & quicquid potentia possit. Senec. Epist. 59.

Τὸ δὲ ὃ ἴσμεν, ὅτι ταῦτα τὰ πάθη ἐν ἡμῶν οἷον νέυρα ἢ μὲνδοι πινὲς ἐνέσται, σπῶσι τε ἡμᾶς, καὶ ἀλλήλοις ἀνδραγαθῶν ἐναντία ἵσται, ἐπ' ἐναντίας περὶ τῆς. Plato de Legib. lib. 1.

|| — Video meliora proboque, Deteriora sequor.

Plato upon this Ground

* Εδοξε δὲ, ὡς νῦν ἐπὶ δε-
κεί, τα μὲν ἀλλὰ ἐπιτηδου-
ματα πάντα, ἢ σφόδρα χα-
λεπὰ ἵδ'. τὸ δ' εἰ τίνα τέχνην
χρὴ γίγνεσθαι χρηστὸν ἀνθρώ-
που, παρὰ χελεπὸν. Plato in
Epinomide.

† Φρόνησιν δὲ καὶ ἀληθείας
δοξὰς βεβαιῶν, ἀπὸ τῶν ὅτι
καὶ περὶ τὸ γῆρας παρὰ γένε-
σι. Id. de Legib. lib. 2.

And above
all, by vi-
tious Ha-
bits and
Practises.

Rom. i,
19, &c.

4. But that which above all other things, most depraves Mens natural Understanding, and hinders them from discerning and judging rightly of Moral Truths, is this; That as stupid and careless Ignorance leads them into fond and superstitious Opinions, and the Appetites of Sense overcome and tempt them into Practices contrary to their Conscience and Judgment; so on the reverse, the multitude of superstitious Opinions, vicious Habits, and debauched Practises, which prevail in all Ages through the greater part of the World, do reciprocally increase Mens gross Ignorance, Carelessness and Stupidity. False and unworthy Notions of God, or Superstitious Apprehensions concerning him, which Men carelessly and inconsiderately happen to take up at first; do (as it were) blind the Eyes of their Reason for the future, and hinder them from discerning what of it self originally was easy enough to be discovered. That which may be known of God, has been manifest enough unto Men in all Ages; for God hath shewed it unto them: For the invisible things of Him from the

Ground declares * All Arts and Sciences to have in his Opinion less of difficulty in them, than that of making Men Good; Insomuch that, it † is well, saith he, if Men can come to attain a right Sense, and just and true Notions of Things, even by that time they arrive at old Age.

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the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal Power and Godhead: So that they who are ignorant of him, cannot but be without excuse. But notwithstanding all the Heathen World had so certain means of knowing God; yet generally they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkned; And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into Images of the meanest and most contemptible Creatures; and worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. The natural Consequence of which absurd Idolatry, and also the just Judgment of God upon them for it, was, that they were given up to a reprobate Mind, to Uncleanness and to all vile Affections to such a degree, that not only their Common Practises, but even their most Sacred Rites and Religious Performances, became themselves the extreamest Abominations. And when Men's Morals are thus corrupted, and they run with greediness into all excess of Riot and Debauchery; then, on the other hand, by the same natural Consequence, and by the same just Judgment of God, both their Vicious Customs and Actions, as well as Superstitious Opinions, reciprocally increase the Blindness Ephes. 4. of their Hearts, darken the Judgment of 18 and 19. their Understandings, stupifie and fear
Y their

their Consciences so as to become

* Justos natura esse factos; — tantam autem esse corruptelam male consuetudinis, ut ab ea tanquam igniculi extinguantur a natura dati; exorianturq; & confirmantur vitia contraria. Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

feeling, and by degrees * extinguish wholly that *Light of Nature* in their own Minds, which was given them originally to enable them to discern between *Good* and *Evil*.

Wherefore
Men have
great need
to be
taught and
instructed
in matters
of Religi-
on.

By these means it comes to pass, that though the great *Obligations* and the principal *Motives* of Morality, are indeed certainly discoverable and demonstrable by right Reason; and all considerate Men, when those *Motives* and *Obligations* are fairly proposed to them, must of necessity (as has been fully proved in the foregoing Head) yield their Assent to them as certain and undeniable Truths; yet under the disadvantages now mentioned, (as it is the case of most Men to fall under some or other of them,) very few are *Themselves* able, in reality and effect to discover those Truths clearly and plainly for themselves; But most Men have great need of particular *Teaching* and much *Instruction*, not without some weight of *Authority*, as well as Reason and *Persuasion*;

1st. To raise and stir up their *Attention*; to move them to shake off their habitual Carelessness, Stupidity and inconsiderateness; to persuade them to make use of their natural Reason

Which

Understanding, and to apply their Minds to apprehend and study the Truth and Certainty of these Things. For, as Men, notwithstanding all the rational Faculties they are by nature indued with, may yet through mere Neglect and Incogitancy be grossly and totally ignorant of the plainest and most obvious Mathematical Truths: so Men may also, for want of Consideration, be very ignorant of some of the plainest Moral Obligations, which, as soon as distinctly proposed to them, they cannot possibly avoid giving their Assent unto.

2. To give them a due *Sense*, and right and just *Apprehensions* concerning these things; to convince them of the great *Concern* and vast *Importance* of them; to correct the false Notions, vain Prejudices, and foolish Opinions, which deprave their Judgment; and to remove that Levity and Heedlessness of Spirit, which makes Men frequently to be in their practise very little influenced by what in abstract Opinion they may seem firmly to Believe. For there are many Men, who will think themselves highly injured, if any one should make any doubt of their Believing the indispensable Obligations of Morality, and the certainty of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments; who yet in their Lives and Actions, seem to have upon their Minds but a very small Sense of

of the Weight and infinite Importance of these great Truths.

3. To *Inculcate* these things frequently upon Them, and press them effectually to the practise * of the plainest and most necessary Duties; to persuade them to moderate those Passions, to subdue those Lusts, to conquer those Appetites, to despise those Pleasures of Sense, and (which is the greatest Difficulty of all) to reform and correct those vicious Customs and evil Habits, which tempt and hurry them too often into the Commission of such things, as they are convinced at the same time, in the Reason of their own Minds, ought not to be practised. For 'tis very possible Men may both clearly understand their Duty, and also be fully convinced of the reasonableness of practising it; and

Rom. 7, 23. yet at the same time, find a *Law* in their Members, warring and prevailing against the *Law* of their Mind, and bringing them into Captivity to the *Law* of Sin and Death. Men * may

* Quidam ad magnificas voces excitantur, & transeunt in affectum dicentium, alacres vultu & animo. Rapiunt illos instigatque rerum pulchritudo. — Juvat protinus quæ audias, facere. Afficiuntur illi, & sunt quales jubentur, si illa animo forma permaneat, si non impetum insignem protinus populus honesti dissuasor excipiat. Pauci illam quam conceperant mentem, domum perferre poterunt. Senec. epist. 109.

stantly

stantly fall back into their accustomed Vices; if the great Motives of their Duty be not very frequently and very strongly inculcated upon them, so as to make very deep and lasting impressions upon their Minds; and they have not some greater and higher Assistances afforded them, than the bare Conviction of their own speculative Reason.

For these Reasons (I say) it is absolutely necessary, that notwithstanding the natural Demonstrableness both of the Obligations and Motives of Morality, yet, considering the manifest corruptness of the present Estate which Humane Nature is in, the generality of Men must not by any means be left wholly to the workings of their own Minds, to the use of their natural Faculties, and to the bare convictions of their own Reason; but must be particularly *Taught and Instructed* in their Duty, must have the Motives of it frequently and strongly pressed and inculcated upon them with great Weight and Authority, and must have many extraordinary Assistances afforded them; to keep them effectually in the Practice of the great and plainest Duties of Religion.

And hence we may, by the way, just-ly observe the exceeding great Use and Necessity there is, of establishing an Order or Succession of Men, whose peculiar Office and continual Employ-
The great Use and Necessity of an Order of Preachers.

ment it may be, to Teach and Instruct People in their Duty, to press and exhort them perpetually to the Practise of it, and to be Instruments of conveying to them extraordinary Assistances for that purpose. To which excellent Institution, the Right and worthy Notion of God and his Divine Perfections, the just Sense and Understanding of the great Duties of Religion, and the universal Belief and due Apprehension of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments; which the generality even of the meaner and more ignorant sort of People among us, are now possess of; is manifestly and undeniably almost wholly owing: As I shall have Occasion hereafter more particularly to observe.

VI. Though in almost every Age there have indeed been in the Heathen World some wise and brave and good Men, who have made it their business to study and practise the Duties of natural Religion. Themselves, and to teach and exhort Others to do the like; who seem therefore to have been raised up by Providence, as Instruments to reprove in some measure and put some kind of check to the extreme superstition and wickedness of the Nations wherein they lived: Yet none of these have ever been able to reform the World, with any considerably great and universal Success. Because they have been but very Few, that

have in earnest set themselves about this excellent Work; and they that have indeed sincerely done it, have themselves been in-
 1. irely ignorant of some Doctrines, and very doubtful and uncertain of others, absolutely necessary for the bringing about that great end; and those things which they have been certain of, and in good measure understood, they have not been able to prove and explain clearly enough; and those that they have been able both to prove and explain by sufficiently clear Reasoning, they have not yet had Authority enough to enforce and inculcate upon Men's Minds with so strong an Impression, as to influence and govern the general practise of the World.

1. There have indeed in almost every age been in the Heathen World, some Wise and Brave and Good Men, who have made it their Business to study and practise the Duties of natural Religion themselves, and to teach and exhort others to do the like. An eminent Instance whereof, in the Eastern Nations, the Scripture it self affords us in the history of Job; concerning whom it does not certainly appear, that he knew any positive revealed Institution of Religion, or that, before his Sufferings, any immediate Revelation was made unto him, as there was to Abraham and the rest of the Patriarchs. Among the Greeks, Socrates seems to be an extraordinary Example of this kind. Con-

cerning whom Plato tells us, in his *Apology*, that * he did nothing else, but go continually about, perswading both old and young, not to be so much solicitous to gratifie the Appetites of the Body, or to heap up Wealth, or to raise themselves to Honour, or gain any outward Advantage whatsoever; as to improve the Mind by the continual Exercise of all Virtue and Goodness: Teaching them,

* Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο πρῶτον ἐγὼ περὶ ἔρχομαι, ἢ πείθων ὑμῶν καὶ νεώτερος καὶ πρεσβύτερος, μήτε σωματικῶν ἐπιμελεῖσθαι, μήτε χρημάτων πρῶτον, μήτε ἄλλου πλὴν τοῦ σφρόδρα, ὡς ἔφη Σωκράτης, ὅπως ὡς αἰετὶς ἐστὶ λεγὼν ὅτι ἐκ ἐκ χρημάτων ἡ ἀρετὴ γίνεταί, ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀρετῆς χρημάτων καὶ πᾶσι λα ταῦτα πῶς ἀνδράποισι ἅπαντα, καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ. Plato in *Apol.* *Socrat.*

that a Man's true value did not arise from his Riches, or from any outward Circumstances of Life; but that True Riches, and every real Good, whether publick or private, proceeded wholly from Virtue. After him, *Plato* and *Aristotle* and Others followed his Example, in teaching Morality. And among the Romans, *Cicero*; and in later times, *Epicetus* and *Antoninus*, and several Others, gave the World admirable Systems of Ethicks, and noble moral Instructions and Exhortations, of excellent Use and Benefit to the Generations wherein they lived, and deservedly of great value and esteem even unto this Day.

Who seem to have been designed by Providence to bear Witness against the Wickedness of the Nations where they lived.

2. So that, I think, it may very justly be supposed, that these Men were raised up and designed by Providence, (the

(the abundant Goodness of God having never left it self wholly without Witness, notwithstanding the greatest corruptions and provocations of Mankind,) as Instruments to reprove in some measure, and put some kind of check to the extreme Superstition and Wickedness of the Nations wherein they lived, or at least to bear Witness against and condemn it. Concerning *Job*, the case is evident and confessed: And, for the same reason, some of the Antientest Writers of the Church have not scrupled

to † call even *Socrates* also, and some others of the Best of the *Heathen* Moralists, by the Name of *Christians*; and to affirm, that * as the Law was as it were a School-master to bring the *Jews* unto *Christ*, so true moral Philosophy was to the *Gentiles* a preparative to receive the Gospel. This perhaps was carrying the matter somewhat too far: But to be sure, thus much we may safely assert, that || whatever any of these Men were at any time enabled to deliver *Wisely* and *Profitably* and *Agreeably* to *Divine Truth*, was, as a *Light shining in a dark Place*, de-

rived

† Καὶ οἱ μετὰ λόγον βιω-
σαντες, χριστιανοὶ εἰσι, καὶ
ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐνομιάζθησαν· οἷον ἐν
Ἑλλήσιν ὡς Σωκράτης καὶ
Ἡράκλειος, καὶ οἱ δυοῖς
αὐτοῖς ἐν βασιλεύσιν ὁ
Ἀβραάμ, &c. Justin Apo-
log. 2.

* Τάχα ὁ καὶ περὶ γυναι-
κῶν τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν ἐδόθη ἡ
φιλοσοφία τότε, πρὶν ἢ
τον κῆρυον καλεῖσθαι καὶ τὰς
Ἑλλήνας ἐπαιδεύωμεν ὅτι
καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ Ἑλληνικόν, ὡς
ὁ νομῶ τὰς Ἑβραίας εἰς
χριστὸν περπατοῦσιν ἀφ' ἑ-
καστοῦ ἡ φιλοσοφία, περὶ ὧν
ποιεῖται ὁ ὑπὸ χριστοῦ τελειν-
μενον. Clem. Alexand.
Strom. 1.

|| Ὁ θεὸς ὁ αὐτοῖς ταῦ-
τα, καὶ ὅσα καλῶς λέλεκται,
ἐφανερώσιν. Orig. Advers.
Cels. lib 6.

rived to them by a Ray of that infinite overflowing Goodness, which does good to all even both *Just and Unjust*; from God the sole Author of all Truth and Wisdom: And That, for some Advantage and Benefit to the rest of the World even in its blindest and most corrupt Estate.

But yet
none of
these Men
were ever
able to re-
form the
World with
any consi-
derable
Success.

Rom. I.
21, & 28.

3. But then, notwithstanding the most that can be made of this Supposition, 'tis certain the *Effect* of all the teaching and instruction even of the best of the Philosophers in the Heathen World, was in comparison very small and inconsiderable. They never were able to reform the World with any great and universal Success, nor to keep together any considerable number of Men in the knowledge and practise of true Virtue. With respect to the Worship of God, *Idolatry* prevailed universally in all Nations; and notwithstanding Men did indeed know God, so as to be without excuse, yet they did not like to retain him in their Knowledge, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkned, and they changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into Images of the vilest Creatures; and no Philosophers ever turned any great number of Men from this absurd Idolatry, to the acknowledgment and Worship of the only true God. In respect of Mens dealings

one

one with another; Honour, and Interest, and Friendship, and Laws, and the Necessities of Society, did indeed cause *Justice* to be practised in many Heathen Nations to a great degree; But very few Men among them were Just and Equitable upon right and true Principles, a due Sense of Virtue, and a constant Fear and Love of God. With respect to themselves, Intemperance and Luxury and unnatural Uncleaness was commonly practised, even in the most civilized Countries; and This not so much in Opposition to the Doctrine of the Philosophers, as by the consent indeed and encouragement of too great a part of them. I shall not enlarge upon this ungrateful and melancholly Subject: There are Accounts enough extant, of the universal corruption and debauchery of the Heathen World. St Paul's Description of it, in the whole first Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, is alone sufficient; and *

the Complaints of their own Writers, abundantly confirm it. The Disciples of the best Moralists, at least the Practisers of their Doctrine, were, in their own Lifetime, very † few; as too plainly appears from the evil Treatment, which that

* Egregium sanctumq; virum si cerno, bimembri
Hoc monstrum puero, vel miranti sub aratro
Piscibus iovenis, & faræ comparo mullæ.

Juvenal. Sat. 13.

See also the places cited a little below.

† Sint licet perhonesti;
— sed audire deposcimus quos sint aut fuerint nu-

great

mero. — *Unus, Duo, Tres.* — At genus humanum non ex bonis pauculis, sed ex cæteris omnibus estimari convenit. *Arnob. advers. Gentes, lib. 2.*

Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrænatus; paucissimis Dei verbis tam placidum, quam ovem, reddam. Da libidinofum, &c. — *Namquis hæc Philosophorum aut unquam præstitit, aut præstare, si velit, potest? Laſtant. lib. 3.*

Παρεῖ μὲρ τοῖς Ἕλλησιν οἷς περ θαύδων, καὶ ἐκ διδασκῶν καὶ διωπύων, &c. *Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 1.*

remarkable instance. These considerations (so very early did they appear to be true,) Affected in such a manner that great admirer of *Socrates, Plato*; that he sometimes seems to give over all Hopes of working any Reformation in Men by Philosophy; and

says, that * a good Man, when he considers these Things, would even choose to sit quiet, and shift for himself; like a Man that in a violent Hurricane, creeps under a Wall for his Defense; and seeing the whole

* Ταῦτα λογισμῷ λαβὼν, ἡσυχίαν ἔχων, καὶ τὰ αὐτῶν πρᾶτ' ὄντων, εἶον ἐν εἰμῶνι κοινοῦ καὶ ζῆλ' ὑπὸ πνέματι φερόμενος, ὑπὸ τυχόν ὑποσᾶς, ὅσων τὸς ἄλλες καταπυμπάμενος ἀνομιᾶς, ἀγαπᾷ εἰ περ αὐτὸς καὶ ἀδικίας τε καὶ ἀνομιῶν ἔργων, τόντε ἐνθάδε βίον βιώσεται, καὶ πὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν αὐτῷ μετὰ χαλῆς ἐλπίδος καὶ ἐλπίδος τε καὶ εὐρυφῆς ἀπαλλάξεται. *Plato de Republ. lib. 6.*

World

World round about him filled with all manner of Wickedness, be content if, preserving his single Self from Iniquity and every evil Work, he can pass away the present Life in Peace, and at last Die with Tranquillity and good Hope. And indeed, for many Reasons, it was altogether impossible, that the Teaching of the Philosophers should ever be able to reform Mankind, and recover them out of their very degenerate and corrupt Estate, with any considerably great and universal Success.

I. In the first place, Because the Number of those, who have in earnest set themselves about this excellent Work, have been exceeding Few, that have Philosophers indeed, that called themselves so, there were enough in every place, and in every Age: But those who truly made it their business to improve their Reason to the height; to free themselves from the Superstition, which overwhelmed the whole World; to search out the Obligations of Morality, and the Will of God their Creator; to obey it sincerely themselves, as far as they could discover it by the Light of Nature; and to encourage and exhort others to do the like; were but a very few Names. The Doctrine of far the greatest part of the Philosophers, consisted plainly in nothing but Words, and Subtilty, and Strife, and empty Contention;

tention; and did not at all amend even their own Manners; much less was fitted to reform the World. Their

Scholars, as Aristotle + excellently describes them, thought themselves bravely improved in Philosophy, and that they were become gallant Men, if they did but hear and understand and learn to dispute about Morality; though it had no effect at all, nor influence upon their Manners: Just as if a sick Man should expect to be healed, by hearing a Physician discourse;

though he never followed any of his Directions: Undoubtedly, faith he, the Mind of the one, was exactly as much improved by such Philosophy; as the Health of the others Body, by such Physick. And no wonder the generality of the common Hearers judged of their own Improvement in Philosophy, by such false measures; when the enormous Viciousness of the Lives of the Philosophers themselves, made it plainly

appear that * their Art was not so much intended and fitted for the Reformation of Men's Manners,

* Inclusos [Philosophos] in Angulis, facienda præcipere, quæ ne ipsi quidem faciunt qui loquuntur; & quoniam se a veris assibus removerunt, apparet eos exercenda lingua causa, vel advocandi gratia, artem ipsam Philosophiæ reperisse. Laſant. lib. 3.

† Ἀλλ' οἱ πολλοὶ ταῦτα μὲν ἐπράττεον, ὅτι δ' ἢ λόγον καταφύγοντες οἶονταί φησιν, καὶ ἔτιως ἔτι σπουδαίως ὁμοίον τι ποιοῦντες τοῖς ἑμύνοιον, οἱ τῶν ἰατρῶν ἀκούσι μὲν ἐπιμελῶς, πῶς δ' ἔστιν ἢ προσουσιμίων. ὥστε ἔν ἑδ' ἐκείνοι εὐ ἔχον τοῦ σώμα, ἔτι δεσπονομένοι: ἔδ' ἔτοι ἢ ψυχῇ, ἔτι φιλοσοφῶντες. Aristot. Ethic. lib. 2. cap. 3.

as to be an *Exercise of Wit and Subtily*, and an *Instrument of Vain-Glory*. Excepting perhaps *Socrates and Plato*, and some others of that Rank; this Account is too plainly true of the greater part of the Philosophers. The Argument is too unpleasant, to instance in particulars. Whoever pleases, may in *Diogenes Laertius* and other Writers, find Accounts enough, of the lewdness and unnatural Vices of most of the Philosophers. It is a shame for Us, so much as to speak of those Things, which were done of them, not only in secret, but even in the most publick manner. I shall here only add the Judgment of *Cicero*; a Man as able to pass a right Judgment in this Matter, as ever lived: Do you think, says

* he, that these Things, [meaning the Precepts of Morality] had any influence upon those Men, (excepting only a very few of them,) who taught, and writ, and disputed about them? No; Who is there of all the Philosophers, whose Mind and Life and Manners were conformable to right Reason? who ever made his Philosophy to be the Law and Rule of his Life, and not a mere Boast and Show of his Wit and

* Sed hæc eadem numcenses apud eos ipsos valere, nisi admodum paucos, a quibus inventa, disputata, conscripta sunt? Quotus enim quisq; Philosophorum invenitur, qui sit ita moratus, ita animo ac vita constitutus, ut ratio postulat; qui disciplinam suam non ostentationem scientiæ, sed legem vitæ putet; qui obtemperet ipse sibi, & decretis suis pareat? Videre licet multos, libidinum servos, &c. Cic. Tusculan. Question. lib. 2.

Parts

Parts? who observed his own Instructions, and lived in obedience to his own Precepts? On the contrary; many of them were Slaves to filthy Lusts, many to Pride, many to Covetousness, &c.

And those few of the Philosophers, who did indeed sincerely endeavour to reform Mankind, were yet themselves entirely ignorant of some Doctrines absolutely necessary to the bringing about this great End, of the Reformation and Recovery of Mankind.

In general: Having no knowledge of the whole Scheme, Order, and State of things, the Method of God's governing the World, his Design in Creating Mankind, the original Dignity of Humane Nature, the Ground and Circumstances of Mens present corrupt Condition, the Manner of the Divine Interposition necessary to their recovery, and the Glorious End to which God intended finally to conduct them: Having no knowledge (I say) of all This; their whole Attempt to discover the Truth of Things, and to instruct others therein, was

* Errant ergo velut in Mari magno, nec quo ferantur, intelligunt; quia nec viam cernunt, nec ducem sequuntur. *Lassant. lib. 6.*

* like wandering in the wide Sea, without knowing whither they were to go, or which way they were

were to take, or having any Guide
to conduct them. And accordingly

the Wifest of them were
never backward to con-
fess their own ignorance
and great blindness: that
Truth || was hid from
them, as it were in an
unfathomable Deep: That

they were much in the
Dark, and very dull and
stupid, not only as to
the profounder things of
Wisdom, but as to such
things also, which seemed
very capable of being in
great part discovered: nay,
that even † those things,

which in themselves were
of all others the most
Manifest, (that is, which,
whenever Made known,
would appear most obvi-
ous and evident,) their
Natural Understanding was
of it self as unqualified

to find out and apprehend, as the
Eyes of Bats to behold the Light of
the Sun: That the very first and most
necessary thing of all, ||

the Nature and Attributes
of God himself, were,
notwithstanding all the ge-
neral Helps of Reason,

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† Ex cæteris Philoso-
phis, nonne optimus &
gravissimus quisq; confite-
tur, multa se ignorare; &
multa sibi etiam atq; etia-
am esse discenda? Cic.
Tusc. Quest. 3.

|| Εὐ βούθρ αὐήθεια.
* Tui ergo te, Cice-
ro, libri arguunt, quam
nihil a philosophia dis-
ci possit ad vitam. Hæc
tua verba sunt: *Mihi au-
tem non modo ad sapien-
tiam cæci videmur; sed
ad ea ipsa, quæ aliqua ex
parte cerni videantur, he-
betes & obtusi.* Lactant.
lib. 3.

† Ωσπερ ἡ καὶ τὰ ἥ-
νυκτείδων ὀμμάτια πρὸς
τὸ φῶς ἔχει τὸ μὲν
ἡμέραν, ἵτω καὶ τὸ ἡμετε-
ρος ψυχῆς ὁ νῦν πρὸς τὴν
τῆ φύσεως φανερότατα πάν-
των. *Aristot. Metaphys. lib.*
2. c. 1.

|| Τὸν μὲν ἐν ποικίλῳ καὶ
παρίεργον τῷδε τῷ παντί,
εὐρεῖν τι ἕρπον, καὶ εὐρεῖν
λέγειν εἰς ἀνάγκας ἀδύνατον.
Plato in Timæo.

very

178 The Evidences of Natural

Profecto eos ipsos, qui se aliquid certi habere arbitrantur; addubitare cogit doctissimorum hominum de maxima re tanta dissensio. *Cit. de Natura Deor. lib. 1.*

* Utinam tam facile vera invenire possem, quam falsa convincere. *Id. ibid.*

† Ἐπεὶ εὐκαλεῖται
μετ' ἐμῆ. — καὶ μοι
δυσκατὸς γέ τίς τόν
θεῖον καὶ ἐμῶν ἐστὶν
ὅτι οὐκ οἶσιν καὶ δυσδιε-
γνῶσθαι. *Plato de Republ.
lib. 4.*

other Men, only in this one thing, that he was duly sensible of his own Ignorance, and || believed that it was merely for that very Reason, that the Oracle pronounced him the wisest of Men.

Particu-
larly, they
were very
ignorant in
what man-
ner God
might be
acceptably
worship-
ped.

More particularly; The Manner, in which God might be acceptably worshipped, these Men were entirely and unavoidably ignorant of. That God ought to be worshipped; is, in the general, as evident and plain from the Light of Nature, as any thing can be: But in what particular Manner, and with what Kind of Service he will be worshipped, cannot be certainly discovered by bare Reason. Obedience to the Obligations of Nature, and Im-

tation

very difficult to them to find out in particular, and still more difficult to explain; it being much * more easy to say what God was not, than what he was: And finally, that the Method of instructing Men effectually, and making them truly Wise and Good, was a thing very obscure and dark and difficult to be found out. In a word: Socrates himself always openly professed, that he pretended to be Wiser than

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ation of the Moral Attributes of God; the wisest Philosophers easily knew, was undoubtedly the most acceptable service to God: But some external Adoration seemed also to be necessary; and how this was to be performed, they could not with any certainty discover. Accordingly even the very best of them complied therefore generally with the outward Religion of their Country, and advised others to do the same; and so, notwithstanding all their wise Discourses, they fell lamentably into the practise of the most foolish Idolatry. Socrates him-

self, * at the Conclusion of one of the bravest Discourses that ever was made by any Philosopher, superstitiously ordered a Sacrifice to be offered for him to *Æsculapius*: (Unless perhaps he rather spake this in mockery of *Æsculapius*; looking upon Death as his truest Deliverance.) Plato, after having delivered very noble and almost divine Truths concerning the Nature and Attributes of the Supreme God, † weakly advises Men to worship likewise Inferiour Gods, Demons, and Spirits; and

* Εἶπεν, ὃ δὲ τελευταῖον ἐφ' ἔργατο. Ὡς Κεῖ-
των, τῷ Ἀσκληπιῷ ὄρεϊ-
λοῦν ἀλεκτρύνα· ἀλλ' ὃ
ἀπόδοτε, καὶ μὴ ἀμελήσητε.
Plato in Phædone.

Illud vero nonne summa vanitatis; quod ante mortem familiares suos rogavit; ut *Æsculapio* gallum, quem voverat, pro se sacrarent. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

† Πρῶτον μὲν, θαμνὶν, πῦρ τὰς μετ' Ὀλυμπίου τε καὶ τῆς τῶν πόλιν ἔχουσας θεῶν, ποῖς χερσὶν ἐδεδόκει

αὐτῆς τοῖς ἄρεσι καὶ δυνά-
τεσι καὶ ἀρεταῖς νόμων,
ὁρῶντα τὰ τ' εὐσεβίας
σκοπεῖν τυγχάνοι. — Με-
τὰ δὲ τὸ τὸν νόμον, καὶ τὰς
δαίμονας ὅγ' ἐμφορῶν ὁρ-
μαζοῖτ' αὖν. — Ἐπακο-
λυθεῖ δ' αὖτε ἰδρύμα-
τα ἰσὰ πατρῶων, θεῶν
κατὰ νόμον ὀργαζόμενα.
Plato de leg. lib. 4.

|| Τὸς μὲν γὰρ θεῶν
ἱερῶντες σάφως, πρῶμμεν.
ἅς δ' εἰκόνας ἀγαλματα
ἰδύσασθαι, ὅς ἡμῖν ἀ-
γαλλοῖσι, καὶ πρὸς αὐτοὺς
ὄντας, ἐκείνους ἠγούμεθα
τὸς ἐμψυχους θεῶς ποκ-
λὴν διὰ ταυτ' ἔνοιασθαι καὶ
χρεῖν ἔχειν. *Plato de Le-
gib. lib. 11.*

* Τὰ Πλάτωνι ἐκ ἀ-
πιδάνως μὲν εἰρημμένα, καὶ
μὴν καὶ διέδεκτο τὸ φιλό-
σοφον ἀξίως καὶ αὐτὰ ἀ-
νασφαρῆναι ἐν τῇ θεῶς τὸ
πονητῶν ἅς ὅλων εὐσεβεία,
ὡς ἔχρην μὴ ποθεῖν, μη-
δὲ μάνειν τῇ εἰδωλολα-
τρίᾳ. *Orig. advers. Cels.
lib. 6.*

† A Patribus acceptos
Deos placet coli. *Cic. de
Legib. lib. 2.*

|| Iam illud ex institu-
tis Pontificum & Aruspi-
um non mutandum est,
quibus hostiis immolan-
dam cuiq; Deo. *Id. i-
bid.*

* Nec sequor Magos
Persarum, quibus aucto-

dared not to condemn the
worshipping even of Sta-
tues also and Images, de-
dicated according to the
Laws of their Country
as if || the Honour they
paid to lifeless Idols
could procure the Favour
and Good will of Superi-
our Intelligences: And
so * he corrupted and
spoiled the best Philoso-
phy in the World, by
adding Idolatry to their
Worship, which he had
wisely and bravely be-
fore proved to be due
to the Creatour of all
Things. After him, Cicero,
the greatest and best
Philosopher that Rome, or
perhaps any other Nation
ever produced, allowed
Men to continue the Idol-
latry of their Ancestors
advised them || to con-
form themselves to the
superstitious Religion of
their Country, in offering
such Sacrifices to different
Gods, as were by Law
established; and * disapproves
and finds fault with the
Persian Magi

or burning the Temples
of the Grecian God's, and
asserting that the whole
Universe was Gods Tem-
ple. In all which, he
only contradicts him-
self, by † inexcusably com-
plying with the Practises
of those Men, whom in
many of his Writings
he largely and excellently
proves to be extremely
foolish upon account of
those very Practises. And
to mention no more, (for
indeed those of a lower
Rank, the *Minuter Philo-*
sophers, as *Tully* calls them,
are not worth the menti-
oning;) That admirable *Moralist Epi-*
ctetus, who for a true Sense of Virtue,
seems to have had no Superiour in the
Heathen World; even He
also || advises Men to offer
Libations and Sacrifices
to the Gods, every one
according to the Religion
and Custom of his Coun-
try.

ribus *Xerxes* inflammasse
templa Græciæ dicitur,
quod parietibus include-
rent deos, quorum hic
mundus omnis templum
esset & domus. Melius
Græci atq; nostri, qui, ut
augerent pietatem in De-
os, easdem illos, quas nos,
urbes incolere voluerunt.
Id. ibid.

† Video te, Cicero, ter-
rena & manufacta vene-
rari. Vana esse intelligis,
& tamen eadem facis,
quæ faciunt ipsi, quos
ipse stultissimos confiteris.
— Si libenter errant eti-
am ii, qui errare se senti-
unt, quanto magis vulgus
indoctum? *Lactant. lib.*
2.

|| *Ἐπειδὴ δὲ, ὅς τις
ἔστω, ἀπὸ τοῦ κατὰ τὸ νό-
τον, ἐκείνου πεποιθὲς. E-*
pistet. cap. 38.

But still more particularly: That which And in
of all other things, these best and what Me-
wisest of the Philosophers were most thod God
absolutely and unavoidably ignorant would be
of; and yet which, of all other things to return-
ing Sin-
was ners.

was of the greatest Importance for Sinful Men to know; was The Method, by which such as have erred from the right way, and have offended God, may yet again restore themselves to the Favour of God, and to the Hopes of Happiness. From the consideration of the Goodness and Mercifulness of God, the Philosophers did indeed very reasonably hope, that God would show himself placable to Sinners, and might be some way reconciled: But when we come to inquire more particularly, what Propitiation he will accept, and in what Manner this reconciliation must be made; here Nature stops, and expects with impatience the aid of some particular Revelation. That God will receive returning Sinners, and accept of Repentance instead of perfect Obedience, They cannot certainly know, to whom he has not declared that he will do so: For though this be the most probable and only means of reconciliation, that Nature suggests; yet whether this will be alone sufficient, or whether God will not require something further, for the Vindication of his Justice and of the Honour and Dignity of his Laws and Government, and for the expressing more effectually his Indignation against Sin, before he will restore Men to the Privileges they have forfeited; they cannot be satisfactorily

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factorily assured. For it cannot positively be proved from any of Gods Attributes, that he is *absolutely obliged* to pardon all Creatures all their Sins at all times, barely and immediately upon their Repenting. There arises therefore from Nature no *Sufficient* Comfort to Sinners, but an anxious and endless Sollicitude about the means of appeasing the Deity. Hence those divers ways of Sacrificing, and numberless Superstitions, which over-spread the Face of the Heathen World; but were so little satisfactory to the wiser part of Mankind, even in those times of darkness; that the more considering Philosophers could not forbear frequently declaring, that * they thought * See *Plato's Alcibiades 2, throughout.* those Rites could avail little or nothing towards appeasing the wrath of a provoked God, or making their Prayers acceptable in his Sight; but that something still seemed to them to be wanting, though they knew not what.

3. Some other Doctrines, absolutely necessary likewise to the bringing about this great End of the Reformation of Mankind; though there was indeed so much proof and evidence of the Truth of them to be drawn from Reason, as that the best Philosophers could not by any means be *intirely ignorant* were very doubtful and uncertain, yet so much *doubtfulness* and *uncertainty*, *tain about.*

uncertainty, and unsteadiness, was there in the Thoughts and Assertions of these Philosophers concerning them, as could

† Præterea nihil apud eos certi est, nihil quod a scientia veniat; — & nemo parat, quia nemo vult ad incertum laborare. *Lastant, lib. 3;*

not but † very much diminish their proper Effect and Influence upon the Hearts and Lives of Men. I instance in the Immortality of the Soul, the Certainty of a Future State,

and the Rewards and Punishments to be distributed in a Life to come. The Arguments, which may be drawn from Reason and from the Nature of things, for the Proof of these great Truths; seem really (as I have before shown) to come very little short of strict Demonstration: And accordingly the wisest Philosophers (as has likewise been shown before) did indeed sometimes seem to have reasoned themselves into a firm Belief of them, and to have been fully convinced of their Certainty and Reality; even so far as to apply them to excellent purposes and uses of Life. But then on the other hand, a Man cannot without some pity and concern of Mind observe, how strangely at other times the weight of the same Arguments seem to have slipped (as it were) out of their Minds; and with what wonderful *Diffidence, Wavering and Unsteadiness*, they discourse about the same Things. I do

not

not here think it of any very great moment, that there were indeed some whole Sects of Philosophers, who absolutely denied the *Immortality of the Soul*, and peremptorily rejected all kind of Expectation of a *Life to come*; (Though, to be sure, this could not but in some measure shock the *common People*, and make them entertain some suspicion about the strength of the Arguments used on the other side of the Question by wiser Men: Yet, I say,) it cannot be thought of any very great moment, that some whole Sects of Philosophers did indeed absolutely deny the *Immortality of the Soul*; Because these Men were weak Reasoners in other matters also, and plainly low and contemptible Philosophers, in comparison of those greater Genius's we are now speaking of. But that which I now observe, and which I say cannot be observed without some pity and concern of Mind, is this; that even those Great Philosophers themselves, the very Best and Wifest, and most considerate of them, that ever lived; notwithstanding the undeniable strength of the Arguments, which sometimes convinced them of the Certainty of a *Future State*; did yet at other times express themselves with so much hesitancy and unsteadiness concerning it, as, without doubt, could not but extremely

extremely hinder the proper effect and Influence, which that most important Consideration ought to have upon the

Hearts and Lives of Men,

† Ἐμὼ μὲν ἀποθανε-
μῖν, ὑμῶν δὲ βιωσόμενοις
ἐπὶ ἡμῶν ἔρχον-
ται ἐπὶ ἀμείνον περὶ γὰρ
ἀδύνατον πάντῃ πάλω ἢ τῷ
θεῷ. *Plato in Apolog. Socr.*

* Quod præter Deos
negat scire quenquam, scit
ipse, utrum melius sit;
nam dixit antè: Sed suum
illud, nihil ut affirmet, te-
net ad extremum. *Cic.*
Tusc. Qu. lib. I.

concerning the

† Νῦν δὲ ἐν ἵε ὅτι παρ'
ἀνδρῶν τε ἐλπίζω ἀριζεῖσθαι
ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῶτο μὲν ἐκ ἀν-
θρώπων διιγχεύεσθαι. *Plato*
in Phæd.

Men: Yet I would not be too peremptory
and confident concerning it:

|| Ἐἰ δὲ οἷον ἀπὸ θη-
μῆσαι ὅτι δὲ ἀνάγκη ἐνδύ-
σθαι εἰς ἄλλον τόπον, καὶ ἀλη-
θῆν ὅτι τὰ λεγόμενα, ὡς ἀ-
εὶ ἐκεῖ εἰσι πάντες οἱ τε θ-
νήσκοντες, &c. *Plato in Apo-
log. Socrat.*

But || if Death be only as
it were a Transmigration
from hence into another
place; and those things,
which are told us, be in-
deed true; that those who
are dead to Us, do all Live

there; Then &c. So likewise Cicero,
speaking

speaking of the same Subject: I will

indeavour, saith * he, to ex-

plain what you desire; yet I would not have you de-

pend upon what I shall say,

as certain and infallible;

But I may guess, as other

Men do, at what shall seem

most probable; And further

than this, I cannot pretend

to go. Again: Which of

those two Opinions, saith †

he, [that the Soul is mor-

tal, or that it is immor-

tal,] is True, God only

knows; Which of them is

most Probable, is a very

Great Question. And again in the same

Discourse, having brought all those ex-

cellent Arguments before-mentioned in

proof of the Immortality of the Soul;

Yet we ought not, saith ||

he, to be over-confident of

it: For it often happens

that we are strongly affected

at first, with an acute Ar-

gument; and yet, a lit-

tle while after, stagger in

our Judgment and alter our

Opinion, even in clearer

Matters than these; For these Things

must be confessed to have some obscurity

in them. And again: I know not how,

saith

* Ea, quæ vis, ut po-
terò, explicabo; nec ta-
men quasi Pythius Apol-
lo, certa ut sint & fixa
quæ dixero; sed ut ho-
munculus unus e multis,
probabilia conjectura se-
quens. Ultra enim quo
progrediar, quam ut veri-
similia videam, non habeo.
Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib.
I.

† Harum sententiarum,
quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis
viderit; quæ verisimillima,
magna Quæstio est. Id.
ibid.

|| Etsi nihil nimis oportet
confidere. Movemur
enim sæpe aliquo acute
concluso: labamus mura-
musq; sententiam clariori-
bus etiam in rebus; in his
est enim aliqua obscuritas.
Id. ibid.

* Nescio quomodo, dum lego, assentior; cum posui librum, & mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum capi cogitare, assensio omnis illa elabitur. *Id. ibid.*

saith * he, when I read the Arguments in proof of the Souls Immortality, methinks I am fully convinced; and yet after I have laid aside the Book, and come to think and consider

of the Matter alone by my self, presently I find my self slipt again insensibly into my old Doubts. From all which it appears, that notwithstanding all the bright Arguments and acute Conclusions, and brave Sayings of the best Philosophers;

† Credebam facile opinionibus magnorum virorum, rem gratissimam [anima immortalitatem] promittentium magis quam probantium. Senec. epist. 102.

yet Life and Immortality were † not fully and satisfactorily brought to Light by bare natural Reason; but Men still plainly stood in need of some farther and more compleat Discovery,

Adeo omnis illa tunc sapientia Socratis, de industria venerat consultæ æquanimittatis, non de fiducia comperit veritatis. *Tertullian: de Anima*

And those things which they were indeed certain of, yet they were not able to prove and explain enough,

4. Those Things which the Philosophers were indeed the most fully certain of, and did in good measure understand; such as the Obligations of Virtue, and the Will of God in matters of Morality; yet they were never able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough, to Persons of all Capacities, in order to their complete conviction and reformation. First, because most of

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of their Discourses upon these Subjects, have been rather speculative and learned, nice and subtle disputes; than practical and universally useful Instructions. They proved, by strict and nice Argumentation, that the *Practise of Virtue* is *wise and reasonable* and *fit to be chosen*; rather than that 'tis of *plain, necessary and indispensable Obligation*; And were able to deduce the *Will of God*, only by such abstract and subtle Reasonings, as the generality of Men had by no means either Abilities or Opportunities to understand or be duly affected by. Their very Profession and manner of Life, led them to make their Philosophy rather * an Entertainment of leisure time, a Trial of Wit and Parts, an exercise of Eloquence, and of the Art and Skill of good Speaking; than an Endeavour to reform the Manners of Men, by showing them their plain and necessary Duty. And accordingly the Study of it, was, as Cicero † himself observes, unavoidably confined to a Few, and by no means fitted for the

* Profecto omnis istorum disputatio, quanquam uberrimos fontes virtutis & scientiæ contineat, tamen collata cum horum [qui rempublicam gubernant] actis perfectisq; rebus, vereor ne non tantum videatur attrulisse, negotiis hominum utilitatis, quantum Oblationem quandam Otii. Cic. de Repub. fragm.

† Est, inquit Cicero, philosophia paucis contenta iudiciis, multitudinem consulto ipsa fugiens. — maximum itaq; argumentum est, phi-

losofiam neq; ad sapientiam tendere, neq; ipsam esse sapientiam; quod mysterium ejus, barba tantum celebratur & palatio. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

bulk

bulk and common sort of Mankind who, as they cannot judge of the true strength of nice and abstract Arguments, so they will always be suspicious of some Fallacy in them.

|| Ολίγους μὲν ὤκησεν ἡ
πειραλλῆς καὶ ἐπιτηδευ-
μένη Πλάτωνος λέξις,
πλείονας δὲ ἢ ἥ εὐτελέστε-
ρον αἶμα καὶ περὶ μαθητικῶς
καὶ ἐπεχασμένως ἢ πολ-
λῶν διδασκάντων καὶ γενη-
άντων ἐστὶ γὰρ ἰδεῖν, ὅτι
μὴ Πλάτωνα ἐν χερσὶ
ἢ δοκούντων ἢ φιλολόγων
μύνων. Orig. advers. Gelf.
lib. 6.

Ἀγροικότερον εἰπὼν ὁ
Ἰνσοῦς, Τῷ δέλοντι ὅτι χι-
τωνὰ σε λαβεῖν, ἄρες καὶ
τὸ ἱμάτιον, βιωφελέστερον
κεκίνηκε τὸν λόγον καὶ πα-
ρέστησεν ἔτι εἰπὼν, ὅτι ὡς
ἐν τῷ Κρίτωνι Πλάτωνος,
ὅτι καὶ ἀκέραιον ἰδιώται
δυνάμει, ἀλλὰ μόγις οἱ
τὰ ἐγκύκλια περὶ τὴν σπουδῆς
Ἑλλήνων φιλοσοφίας μεμα-
δηκότες. Id. lib. 7.

all Capacities, in order to their com-
plete conviction and reformation; was
because they never were able to frame
to themselves any complete, regular,
and consistent System or Scheme of
things; but the Truths which they

* Οὐκ ὅτι ἀλλότρια
ἐστὶ τὰ Πλάτωνος διδασκ.

None || but Men of Parts
and Learning, of Study
and liberal Education,
have been able to profit
by the sublime Doctrine
of Plato, or by the sub-
tle disputations of other
Philosophers; whereas the
Doctrine of Morality,
which is the Rule of Life
and Manners, ought to be
plain, easy and familiar,
and suited fully to the
Capacities of all Men.
Secondly, Another Reason
why the Philosophers were
never able to prove and ex-
plain clearly and distinctly
enough, even those things
of which they were the
most Certain, to Persons of

all Capacities, in order to their com-
plete conviction and reformation; was
because they never were able to frame
to themselves any complete, regular,
and consistent System or Scheme of
things; but the Truths which they
taught, were * single and
scattered, accidental as it

were

were, and hit upon by chance, rather than by any Knowledge of the whole true state of Things; and consequently less universally convictive. Nothing could be more Certain, (as they all well knew), than that *Virtue* was unquestionably to be chosen, and the Practise of it to be recommended necessarily above all things; And yet they could never clearly and satisfactorily make out, upon what Principles originally and for what End ultimately, this Choice was to be made; and upon what Grounds it was universally to be supported. Hence they perpetually † disagreed, opposed, and contradicted one another in all their Disputations to such a degree, that St. *Austin* somewhere out of *Varro* reckons up no less than 280 Opinions concerning that one Question, What was the Chief Good or Final Happiness of Man. The Effect of all which differences could not, without doubt, but be a mighty hindrance to that Conviction and general Influence, which That great Truth, in the Certainty whereof they All clearly agreed, (namely, that the Practise

ματα τῶ χειρὸς· ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐκ
ἐστὶ πάντη ὁμοία, ὥσπερ ἐδὲ
τὰ τῶ ἄλλων. — ἐκείνος
ἦν πῆς, ἀπο μέρους τῶ σπερ-
ματικῆς θεῖς λογι, τὸ συζητῶν
ὁρῶν, καλῶς ἐφδέξατο. Οἱ
ὅ τὰναντία αὐτοῖς ἐν κλει-
ωτέροις εἰρηκότεσι, ἐκ ἐπιστή-
μῳ τῶ ἀποπρὸν ἢ γνῶ-
σιν τῶ ἀνέλεγτον φαίνονται
ἐχρηκέναι. *Justin. Apolog.*
1.

† Nec, quid defendere debeant; scientes; nec quid refutare. Incurfantq; passim sine delectu omnia quæ asserunt, quicunq; dissentiunt. *Laſant; lib. 7.*

of

of *Virtue* was necessary and indispen-
sable,) ought to have had upon the
Minds and Lives of Men. This whole
Matter, is excellently set forth by La-

* Totam igitur verita-
tem, & omne divinæ re-
ligionis arcanum Philo-
sophi attigerunt. Sed aliis
refellentibus, defendere
id, quod invenerant, ne-
quiverunt; quia singulis
ratio non quadravit; nec
ea, quæ vera senserant, in
summam redigere potuerunt.
Laſant. lib. 7.

and none of them were able to collect
into One whole and Entire Scheme, the
several Truths dispersed among them All;
therefore they were not able to maintain
and defend what they had discovered. And
again; having set down a brief sum-
mary of the whole Doctrine and Design
of true Religion, from the Original
to the Consummation of all Things;

† Quam summam, quia
Philosophi non compre-
henderunt; hæc verita-
tem comprehendere po-
tuerunt; quamvis ea sere,
quibus summa ipsa con-
stat, & viderint & expli-
caverint. Sed diversi ac
diverse illa omnia protu-
lerunt, non annectentes
nec causas rerum, nec

Lantius: The Philosophers,
saith * he, take them All
together, did indeed disco-
ver all the particular Do-
ctrines of true Religion;
But because each one indea-
voured to confute what the
others asserted; and no One
single Scheme, was in all its
parts consistent, and agree-
able to Reason and Truth;
and none of them were able to collect
into One whole and Entire Scheme, the
several Truths dispersed among them All;
therefore they were not able to maintain
and defend what they had discovered. And
again; having set down a brief sum-
mary of the whole Doctrine and Design
of true Religion, from the Original
to the Consummation of all Things;
This Entire Scheme, says †
he, because the Philosophers
were ignorant of, therefore
they were not able to com-
prehend the Truth; notwith-
standing that they saw and
discovered singly, almost all
the Particulars of which
the whole Scheme consists:
But this was done by diffe-
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Men and at different
times, and in different Man-
ners; (with various mix-
tures of different Errours,

what every one disco-
vered of Truth singly;) and
without finding the Con-
nexion of the Causes, and
Consequences and Reasons of
Things; from the mutual
dependencies of which, the
Completeness and Perfection
of the whole Scheme arises.
Whereas, had there been any
Man, who could have col-
lected and put together in Order all

several Truths, which were taught sing-
ly and scatteredly by Philosophers of all
different Sects, and have made up out
of them One Entire consistent Scheme; truly
it would not have differed much from
the Christians; But This, it was not possi-
ble for any Man to do, without having the
entire System of Things first Revealed to

us. Lastly, Even those Things, which
the Philosophers were not only them-
selves certain of, but which they have al-
ways been able to prove and explain to Others;
with sufficient clearness and plainness;
such as are the most obvious and necessary
Principles of Life; they have not yet had
Authority enough to inforce and inculcate
on Men's Minds with so strong an
Impression, as to influence and govern
the general practise of the World. The

consequentias, nec ratio-
nes; ut summam illam;
quæ continet universa, &
compingerent & comple-
rent. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

Quod si extitisset ali-
quis qui veritatem spar-
sam per singulos, per se-
ctasq; diffusam, colligeret
in unum, ac redigeret in
corpus; is profecto non
dissentiret a nobis. Sed
hoc nemo facere, nisi ve-
ri peritus ac sciens, po-
test. Verum autem non
nisi ejus scire est, qui sic
doctus a Deo. *Id. ibid.*

And these
things
which they
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to prove
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not suffi-
cient Autho-
rity to in-
force in
Practise

Truths which

* *Platonis documenta*, quamvis ad rem multum conferant, tamen parum habent *Firmitatis* ad probandam & implendam veritatem. *Lactant. lib.*

7.

† *Quid ergo?* nihilne illi [*Philosophi*] simile præcipiunt? Imo permulta, & ad verum frequenter accedunt. Sed nihil ponderis habent illa præcepta, quia sunt humana; & auctoritate majori, id est, divina illa, carent. Nemo igitur credit; quia tam se hominem putat esse qui audit, quam est ille qui præcipit. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

|| *Εἰπομε δ' ἂν ἀληθὲς εἶναι, τὸς δωρηθέντας διαδίδναι τὸς ἀκροατας, & λεγόμενων ὑπὸ βιῶντας, ὡς τέτων ὑπὸς ἐχόντων. Διαπίθενται Ἰουδαῖοι & Χριστιανοὶ περὶ τῶ ἀπ' αὐτῶν καλυμμένῳ μέλλοντι αἰῶνι. — Δουκύντω ἐν τῇ κίλισθ' ἢ ἐν ἐυλόμῳ, πίνες διεπύθησαν περὶ αἰωνίων κολάσεων, ὡς τὸ πλεονεξία & ματαγωγῶν.* *Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 8.*

Παρεὰ μὲν πῶς ἔκτισεν εἰς πρὸς τοὺς αἰῶνες, & ἐν οἷς οὐδὲν δυνάμει, & εἰς Πολέμων, μεταβαλόντες ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ & μαχόμενοι τὸ εἶναι, ἐπιλοσόφησαν. ὅθεν ὁ τῶ Ἰησοῦ, ὁ μόνος πᾶσι δίδωκε, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ & πολλαπλασίους οἰήσεις γινόμενοι πνευματικοὶ Χριστοί. *Idem. lib. 3.*

Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, &c. *Numquid hæc Philosophorum &c. Lactant. lib. 3. See this passage cited above pag. 272.*

they proved by speculative Reason, * wanted still some more sensible Authority to back them, and make them of more Force and Efficacy in Practice, and the † *Precepts* which they laid down, however evidently reasonable and fit to be obeyed, seemed still to want Weight, and to be but the *Precepts* of Men. Hence || none of the *Philosophers*, even of those who taught the clearest and certainest Truths, and offered the best and wisest *Instructions*, and enforced them with the strongest *Motives* that could be, were yet ever able to work any remarkable Change, in the Minds and Lives of any considerable Part of Mankind; as the preaching of Christ and his *Ap-*

files

files undeniably did. Neither does it appear in History, that * any Number of Socrates or Plato's Followers, were convinced of the Excellency of true Virtue or the Certainty of its final Reward, in such a manner as to be willing to lay down their Lives for its sake; as Innumerable of the Disciples of Christ, are known to have done.

In *Speculation* indeed, it may perhaps seem possible, that, notwithstanding it must be confessed Philosophy cannot discover any complete and satisfactory remedy for *past* Miscarriages, yet the Precepts and Motives offered by the best Philosophers, might at least be sufficient to amend and reform Men's Manners for the *future*. But in *Experience and Practise* it hath on the contrary appeared to be altogether impossible, for Philosophy and bare Reason to reform Mankind effectually, without the Assistance of some higher Principle. For, though the bare natural Possibility of the thing, cannot indeed easily be denied; yet in *this* Case, (as Cicero excellently expresses

† it,) in like manner as in *Physick* it matters nothing, whether a Disease be such

* Σωκράτης μὲν γὰρ ἐκείνους ἐπεισέθεν, ὅτι περὶ τὰς τε τοῦ δόγματος ἀποδείξεις καὶ ἀπὸ Σωκράτους ἀποδείξεις γνωστὴν ἔχει φιλοσοφίαν ἐν δὲ φιλολόγοις μόνον ἐπείδησαν. ἀλλὰ καὶ πανταχοῦ ἰσθῶται καὶ δεξιὰ καὶ ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ δαυδάτε καὶ ταφροσύναντες. Justin. Apolog. 1.

† Nam si, consensu omnium Philosophorum, sapientiam nemo assequitur;

in summis malis omnes
sumus, quibus vos opti-
mè consultum a Diis im-
mortalibus dicitis. Nam
ut nihil interest utrum ne-
mo valeat, an nemo possit
valere; sic non intelligo
quid intersit, utrum nemo
sit sapiens, an nemo esse
possit. Cic. de Naturâ De-
or. lib. 3.

as that no Man does, or
no Man can recover from
it; so neither does it make
any difference, whether by
Philosophy no Man is, or
no Man can be made wise
and good: So that, with-
out some greater Help and
Assistance, Mankind is
plainly left in a very bad

State. Indeed in the original uncor-
rupted State of Humane Nature, be-
fore the Mind of Man was depraved
with prejudicate Opinions, corrupt
Affections, and vicious Inclinations,
Customs and Habits; right Reason
may justly be supposed to have been
a sufficient Guide, and a Principle
powerful enough to preserve Men in
the constant Practise of their Duty:
But in the present Circumstances and
Condition of Mankind, the wisest and
most sensible of the Philosophers them-
selves have not been backward to com-
plain, that they found the *Understand-*
ings of Men so dark and cloudy, their
Wills so byassed and inclined to Evil, their
Passions so outrageous and rebelling against
Reason; that they lookt upon the Rules
and Laws of right Reason, as very
hardly practicable, and which they
had very little Hopes of ever being
able to perswade the World to submit
to: In a Word, they confessed that
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Humane Nature was strangely corrupted; and acknowledged this Corruption to be a Disease whereof they knew not the true Cause, and could not find out a sufficient Remedy. So that the great Duties of Religion, were laid down by them as Matters of speculation and dispute, rather than as the Rules of Action; and not so much urged upon the Hearts and Lives of Men, as proposed to the Admiration of those, who thought them scarce possible to be effectually practised by the generality of Men. To remedy all these Disorders, and conquer all these Corruptions; there was plainly wanting some extraordinary and supernatural Assistance; which was above the reach of bare Reason and Philosophy to procure, and yet without which the Philosophers themselves were sensible there * could never be any truly Great Men.

* Nemo unquam vis magnus, sine Divino Afflatus fuit. Cicero.

VII. For these Reasons there was plainly wanting a Divine Revelation, to recover Mankind out of their universally degenerate Estate, into a state suitable to the original excellency of their Nature: Which Divine Revelation, both the Necessities of Men, and their natural Notions of God, gave them reasonable ground to expect and hope for; As appears from the acknowledgments which the

best and wisest of the Heathen Philosophers themselves have made, of their Sense of the necessity and want of such a Revelation; and from their Expressions of the Hopes they had entertained, that God would some time or other vouchsafe it unto them.

A Divine Revelation absolutely necessary for the recovery of Mankind.

1. There was plainly wanting a *Divine Revelation*, to recover Mankind out of their universal corruption and degeneracy; And without such a Revelation, it was not possible that the World should ever be effectually reformed. For If (as has been before particularly shown) the gross and stupid Ignorance, the innumerable Prejudices and vain Opinions, the strong Passions and Appetites of Sense, and the many vitious Customs and Habits, which the generality of Mankind continually labour under; make it undeniably too difficult a Work, for men of all Capacities to discover every One for himself, by the bare Light of Nature, all the particular Branches of their Duty; but most Men, in the present State of Things, have manifestly need of much Teaching, and particular Instruction: If those who were best able to discover the Truth and instruct others therein, namely the Wisest and Best of the Philosophers, were Themselves unavoidably altogether ignorant of some Doctrines, and

very

very doubtful and uncertain of others, absolutely necessary to the bringing about that great *End*, of the Reformation of Mankind: *If* those Truths, which they were themselves very certain of; they were not yet able to prove and explain clearly enough, to vulgar Understandings: *If* even those things, which they proved sufficiently, and explained with all clearness, they had not yet Authority enough to inforce and inculcate upon Men's Minds with so strong an Impression, as to influence and govern the general Practice of the World; neither pretended to afford Men any supernatural Assistance, which yet was very necessary to so great a Work: And *If*, after all, in the discovery of such Matters as are the great Motives of Religion, Men are apt to be more easily wrought upon, and more strongly affected, by good Testimony, than by the strictest abstract Arguments; So that, upon the whole, 'tis plain the Philosophers were never by any means well qualified to reform Mankind with any considerable Success: Then there was evidently wanting some particular Revelation, which might supply all these Defects: There was plainly a Necessity of some particular Revelation to

* Νομοδότης ὅστις νῦν
κείται, ἔποτε μὴ πολ-
μύση καὶ νομιμῶν, ἐπὶ θεο-
σέβειαν, ἥτις μὴ σαφὲς
ἔχει π, πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐαν-
τος. — μὴδὲν τοιαύτῃ
εἰδὼς ὡς περὶ ὅδ' ὅρα δὴ
τὸν εἶδεναι τῇ θεῇ φύ-
σει τῇ πύτων πύει. Pla-
to in Epinomide.

Τὰ γὰρ δὴ τοιαῦτα [θε-
ῶν δεξαμενίας] ἔτ' ὀψά-
μεθα ἡμεῖς οὐκ ὄντες τε
πόλιν εἰδὲν ἄλλῃ πύσῳ-
μεθα ἐὰν νῦν ἔχομεν. εἰδὲ
χρητῶμεθα ἐξηρητῇ, ἀλλ'
ἢ τὸ παλαιὸν Θεῶ. Plato
de Republ. 4.

† Το μὲν ἀληθές, ὃ
ἔστιν, διὰ χειρὶς εἶδαι ταῦτα
ἔστις ἔχειν πολλῶν ἀμ-
φισβητημάτων, Θεῶ δὲ.
Plato de Legib. lib. 1.

|| Τὸ δὲ ἐν τῷ μέθ-
ω μὲν φύσει κρείττοντον
αὐτῶν ὡς οἷον τε
μάλιστα καὶ ἀεὶ μαδῶν,
εἰ διδασκοί πρὸς ἀλλ' ἑδ'
ἐν διδασκῶν, εἰ μὴ Θεός
ὑπονοῖτο. Plato in Epi-
nomide.

discover * in what Man-
ner, and with what Kind
of external Service, God
might acceptably be wor-
shipped: There was a Ne-
cessity of some particu-
lar Revelation, to disco-
ver what Expiation God
would accept for Sin; by
which the Authority, Ho-
nour, and Dignity of his
Laws might be effectually
vindicated: There
was a Necessity of some
particular Revelation, to
give Men full assurance
of the Truth of those
great Motives of Religion,
the Rewards and Punish-
ments of a future State; which,
withstanding the strongest Arguments
of Reason, Men could not yet for-
bear doubting of: In fine, There was
a Necessity of some particular Divine
Revelation, to || make the
whole Doctrine of Reli-
gion clear and obvious to
all Capacities, to add
Weight and Authority to
the plainest Precepts, and
to furnish Men with ex-
traordinary Assurances to
enable them to overcome

the Corruptions of their Nature. And
without

without the Assistance of such a Revelation, 'tis manifest it was not possible that the World could ever be effectually reformed; Ye may e'en give over, saith * Socrates, all Hopes of amending Mens manners for the future, unless God be pleased to send you some Other person to instruct you: And Plato, Whatever, saith † he, is set right and as it should be, in the present Evil state of the World; can be so only by the particular Interposition of God.

* Εἰπα ὁ σοκράτης χεῖ-
ρον χαθεύδοντες διατε-
λοῖτε ἄν, εἰ μὴ πνα ἄλ-
λον ὑμῶν ὁ θεὸς ἐπι-
πέμψῃ, κηρύξαν ὁ ὑμῶν.
Plato in Apolog. Socratis.

† Εὖ γὰρ χρὴ εἰδέναι,
ὅ, π. περ ἄν σωθῇ τε καὶ
ῥηῖνται οἷον δεῖ, ἐν τοι-
αύτῃ καταστάσει πολιτει-
ᾳ, θεὸς μόνον αὐτὸ σω-
σά. Plato de Republ.
lib. 6.

2. Since therefore there was plainly *That it*
and confessedly wanting a Divine Re- *was agree-*
velation, to relieve the Necessities of *able to the*
Men in their Natural State; And since *dictates of*
no Man can pretend to say, that it is *Nature*
inconsistent with any of the Attributes *and right*
of God, or unbecoming the Wisdom *Reason, to*
of the Creatour of all things, to sup- *expect or*
ply that Want; to reveal to his Crea- *hope for*
tures more fully the way to Happi- *such a d?-*
ness; to make more particular disco- *vine Re-*
veries of his Will to them; to set be- *velation.*
fore them in a clearer Light, the
Rewards and Punishments of a future
State; to explain in what manner he
will be pleased to be worshipped; and
to declare what satisfaction he will
accept for Sin, and upon what condi-
tions

tions he will receive returning Sinners; Nay, since on the contrary, it seems more suitable to our natural Notions of the Goodness and Mercy of God, to suppose that he should do all this, than not: It follows undeniably, that it was most reasonable, and agreeable to the dictates of Nature, to *expect* or *hope for* such a divine Revelation. The generality of the Heathen World, who were far more equal and less prejudiced Judges in this matter, than our modern Deists; were so fully perswaded, that the great Rules for the conduct of Humane Life must receive their Authority from Heaven; that their chief Law-givers thought it not a sufficient recommendation of their Laws, that they were agreeable to the Light of Nature; unless they pretended also, that they received them from God. But I have no need in this Argument, to make use of the Examples of Idolatrous Law-givers: The Philosophers themselves, the Best and Wisest, and the least Superstitious of them, that ever lived; were not ashamed to confess openly, their Sense of the Want of a Divine Revelation; and to declare their Judgment, that it was most natural and truly agreeable to right and sound Reason, to *hope for* something of that Nature. There is, besides

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sides the several places before-cited, a most excellent passage in Plato to this purpose; one of the most remarkable passages indeed in his whole Works, though not quoted by any that I have met with; which therefore I think highly worthy to be transcribed at large, as a just and unanswerable reproach to all those who deny that there is any Want or Need of a Revelation. It seems best to me, saith

* Socrates to one of his Disciples, that we expect quietly; nay it is absolutely necessary, that we wait with patience, till such time as we can Learn certainly, how we ought to behave our selves both towards God and towards Men. When will that time come, replies the Disciple; and who is it that will teach us this? For methinks I earnestly desire to see and know who the Person is that will do it. It is one, answers Socrates, who has now a Concern for you. But in like manner, as Homer relates that Minerva took away the Mist from before Diomedes's Eyes, that he might be able to distinguish

* ΣΩΚ: Εμοὶ μὲν ἔνδοξαι κερήσων ἔσθ', ἢ συχρῆαν ἔχειν. — ἀναγκάων ἔνδοξαι κερήσων, ἔως ἀντιπρὸς μάλιστα ὡς δεῖ παρὰ θεῶν καὶ τῶν ἀνδρῶν διακρίσθαι. ΑΛΚ. Πότε ἔνδοξαι ὁ χερῶν οὐρανῶν, ὁ Σόκράτης; καὶ τίς ὁ παιδύων; ἡ δὲ γὰρ ἔνδοξαι μοι δοκῶ ἰδεῖν τὸ πᾶν τὸ ἀνδρῶν τίς ἐστι. ΣΩΚ: Οὐτός ἐστιν, ὃ μέλει περὶ σέ. Ἀλλὰ δοκῶ μοι, ὡς περὶ τοῦ Διομήδου φησὶ πῶς Ἀθῶν Ὀμήρου ἀπὸ τῆς ὀφθαλμῶν ἀφελὲν τὴν ἀχλὺν, ὅφρ' εὖ γινώσκοι νῦν θεὸν ἡδὲ καὶ ἀνδρᾶ ἄνω καὶ σὺ δεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πρῶτον ἀφελόντα τὴν ἀχλὺν, ἢ νῦν παρῶσα πυγχαίει, τοτὶς καὶ τῇ ἡδὲ παρῶσα δὲ ὡς μέλλεις γινώσκειν ἡμῖν κακὸν ἡδὲ καὶ ἐσθλόν· νῦν μὲν γὰρ ἔτι

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ἂν μοι δοκῇ συνδῆναι.
 ΑΛΚ: Ἀφαιρέτω, εἴτε
 βέλεται, πῶν ἀχλὺν, εἴτε
 ἄλλο τι ὡς ἐγὼ πα-
 ρεσκεύασμαι μηδὲν ἀν-
 ρεύειν ἢ ὑπ' ἐκείνου περ-
 πασσμένων, ὅστις ποτ' ἐ-
 σιν ὁ ἀνδραπῶ, εἴ γε
 μέλλοιμι βέλτερον ᾔσκησαι.
 ΣΩΚ: Ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ κεί-
 νῳ θαυμαστὴν ὄσιν περὶ
 σε περὶ μίαν ἔχει. ΑΛΚ:
 Εἰς τότε πίνω καὶ τὴν
 δυσίαν ἀναβάλλω, καὶ κρῖ-
 νον εἴ μοι δοκῇ. ΣΩΚ:
 Καὶ οὐδὲν γὰρ σοὶ δοκῇ
 ἀσφαλές, ὅτι ὅτι ἢ πα-
 ρακινδυνεύειν πλείον
 κινδυνόν. — ΑΛΚ: Τοῖς
 θεοῖς ἢ καὶ σεφάνης καὶ τὰ ἄ-
 λια πάντα τὰ νομιζόμενα
 τίτε δώσουσι. ὅταν ἐκεί-
 νω πὴν ἡμέραν ἐλθῶσαν
 ἴδω, ἢ ξὺ δ' εἰς δια μακροῦ,
 τέτων δελόντων. Plato
 in Alcibiade 2. [If it be
 supposed that Socrates in
 this passage means Himself,
 (which is very difficult ;) yet
 it nevertheless very
 lively represents the great
 Sense which the most consi-
 derate Heathens had, of
 their Want of some Extra-
 ordinary Instruction.]

one Person from another
 so it is necessary that the
 Mist which is now before
 your Mind, be first taken
 away, that afterwards you
 may learn to distinguish right-
 ly betwixt Good and Evil;
 for, as yet, you are not able
 to do it. Let the Person
 you mentioned, replies the
 Disciple, take away this
 Mist, or whatever else it be,
 as soon as he pleases: For
 I am willing to do any
 thing he shall direct, who-
 soever this Person be; so
 that I may but become a good
 Man. Nay, answers So-
 crates, That Person has a
 wonderful readiness and wil-
 lingness to do all this for
 you. It will be best then,
 replies the Disciple, to
 forbear offering any more
 Sacrifices, till the time that
 this Person appears. You
 judge very well, answers
 Socrates; it will be much
 safer so to do, than to

run so great a hazard of offering Sa-
 crifices, which you know not whether they
 are acceptable to God or no. Well then,
 replies the Disciple, we will Then make
 our Offerings to the Gods, when That
 Day

Day comes; And I hope, God willing, may not be far off. And in another place, the same Author, having given a large Account of that most excellent Discourse, which Socrates made a little before his Death, concerning the great Doctrines of Religion, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Certainty of a Life to come; introduces one of his Disciples replying in the following manner: I am, saith * he, of the same Opinion with you, O Socrates, concerning these things; that, to discover the certain Truth of them, in this present Life, is either absolutely impossible for us, or at least exceeding difficult; Yet, not to enquire with our utmost diligence into what can be said about them, or to give over our inquiry before we have carried our search as far as possible, is the sign of a mean and low Spirit: On the contrary, we ought therefore by all means to do one of these two things; either, by hearkening to Instruction, and by our own diligent Study, to find out the Truth; or, if that be

* Εμοὶ γὰρ δοκεῖ, ὡς Σό-
κρατες, περὶ τῶν τοιούτων
ἵστω, ὥσπερ καὶ σοὶ· τὸ
μὲν σαφὲς εἶδέναι ἐν τῷ
νῦν βίῳ ἢ ἀδύνατον εἶναι,
ἢ παρὰ χάλεπον ἢ τὸ μὲν-
πιαυτὰ [leg: τὰ] λε-
γόμενα περὶ αὐτῶν μὴ
εἶναι πᾶσι τρυφήν ἐλεγ-
χεῖν, καὶ παραφύσασθαι
περὶ ἀνπανταχὴ σκοπῶν
ἀπίστην περὶ πάντων μαλ-
λα καὶ εἶναι ἀνδρείας. [Note
that Ficinus in his transla-
tion of this passage, as if
the Word εἶναι was to be
repeated ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινῆ
with παραφύσασθαι, writes
absurdly non desistere, in-
stead of desistere.] Δεῖν
γὰρ περὶ αὐτὰ ἐν γὰρ π τῶ-
ν διαπραξάμεναι ἢ μα-
δεῖν ὅτι εἴχει, ἢ εὐρεῖν,
ἢ, εἰ ταῦτα ἀδύνατον,
τὸ γὰρ βέλπιδον τῶν Ἀν-
δρωπίνων λόγων λαβόντα
καὶ δυσσεγεκτότατον, ἐπὶ
τῷ ὀχήμενον, ὥσπερ
absolutely

ἐπὶ ῥηδίας, κινδυνεύοντα
 διαπλεῖσαι. † ἔτι μὴ
 πρὸς δυνάμει ἀσφαλτέστερον
 καὶ ἀκινδυνότερον, ἐπὶ βέλ-
 λαιοτέρῃ ὁχλήματι, ἢ
 λόγῳ Θεοῦ πρὸς, δια-
 πορεύσθαι. Plato in Pha-
 done.

absolutely impossible, then to
 fix our Foot upon that which
 to humane Reason, after the
 utmost search, appears best
 and most probable; and
 trusting to That, venturing
 upon that bottom to direct
 the course of our Lives ac-

cordingly: Unless a Man could have found
 some more sure and certain Conduct to
 carry him through this Life; such as a
 Divine Discovery of the Truth, would
 be. I shall mention but one Instance
 more, and that is of Porphyry; who,
 though he lived after our Saviour's
 time, and had a most inveterate be-
 tred to the Christian Revelation in

† Quum autem dicit
 Porphyrius, in primo de
 Regressu Animæ libro, non-
 dum receptum in unam
 quandam sectam quæ uni-
 versalem viam animæ con-
 tineret liberandæ, non-
 dumq; in suam notitiam
 eandem viam historiali
 cognitione perlatam; pro-

cul dubio confitetur, esse aliquam; sed nondum in suam
 venisse notitiam. Ita ei non sufficiebat quicquid de animæ
 liberanda studiosissime didicerat, sibi quæ, vel potius alia,
 posse ac tenere videbatur. Sentiebat enim adhuc sibi de
 esse aliquam præstantissimam auctoritatem, quam de
 tanta sequi oporteret. Augustin de Civitate Dei, lib. 10,
 c. 32.

particular, yet † confes-
 ses in general, that he
 was sensible there was
 wanting some universal Me-
 thod of delivering Men
 Souls, which no Sect of
 Philosophy had yet found
 out.

3. This sense of the Antient and Wisest Philosophers, is much departed from by our *Modern Deists*; who contend that there was no Want, no Need of a Revelation; that Philosophy and right Reason was of it self sufficiently able, to instruct and preserve Men in the practise of their Duty; and that nothing was to be expected from Revelation. But besides what has been already hinted concerning the extreme Barbarity of the present Heathen World, and what the Philosophers both Greeks and Latins have confessed concerning the state of the more civilized Nations wherein they lived; I think we may safely appeal even to our Adversaries themselves, *whether* the Testimony of *Christ*, (without considering at present what Truth and Evidence it has,) concerning the Immortality of the Soul, and the Rewards and Punishments of a Future State, have not had (notwithstanding all the Corruptions of Christians,) visibly in Experience and Effect, a * greater and more powerful influence upon the Lives and Actions of Men, than the reasonings of all the Philosophers that ever were in the World; *Whether* credible Testimony, and the Belief and

The unreasonableness of Modern Deists, in denying the Want and Use of a Revelation.

* Οὐκ ὀλίγους, Ἕλληνας καὶ Βαρβάρους, σοφούς καὶ ἀνοήτους. μέλει θανάτου ἀγωνίζεσθαι ὑπὲρ Χριστιανισμοῦ. ἢ αὐτὸν μὴ ἔξομάσονται ὅπερ ἑαίς ὑπὲρ ἄλλης δόξης ἰσορροποῦνται. *Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 1.*

Authority

Authority of Revelation, be not in it self as it were a Light held to the Consciences of stupid and careless Men; and the most natural and proper means that can be imagined, to awaken and rowze up many of those, who would be little affected with all the strict Arguments and abstract Reasonings in the World; And, to bring this matter to a short Issue; whether in Christian Countries, (at least where Christianity is professed in any tolerable degree of Purity,) the ge-

nerality even † of the meaner and most vulgar and ignorant People have not Truer and Worthier Notions of God, more just and right Apprehensions concerning his Attributes and Perfections, a deeper Sense of the Difference of Good and Evil, a greater regard to moral Obligations and to the plain and most necessary Duties of Life, and a more firm and universal Expectation of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments;

† Ὡς μὲν καὶ τὸ παλαιὸν βραχὺς τινὰς καὶ ἀειδμῶ ληστές, δευδὲς περὶ Θεοῦ φρεῖν δόξας, ἀλλὰ μυρία πλῆθη βαρβάρων. Euseb. Demonstrat. Evangel. lib. 3. c. 3.

Αἱ δὲ τῷ Θεῷ Χριστῷ μαθητὰς δίδεσθαι ἐκκλησίαις, σωσέμεν ταῖς αὐτῶν παρρησίαις δὴμων ἐκκλησίαις, ὡς φασὶν εἶναι ἐν κόσμῳ. Τίς γὰρ ἐκ αὐτῶν ὁμολογήσεται, καὶ τὸς χεῖρας τῆ ἀποτῆ ἐκκλησίαις, καὶ συγκρίσει τῇ βασιλείῳ τῶν ἐλπίδων, πολλὰ κρείττους τυγχάνειν τῇ ἐν τοῖς δήμοις ἐκκλησιῶν; [Note, this passage is both corruptly printed, πολλῶν instead of πολλῶ; and also the Sense of it hurt by an imperfect Translation. Origen. adver. Cels. lib. 3. Edit. Cantab. pag. 128.]

than

than in any Heathen Country, any considerable Number of Men were ever found to have had.

It may here perhaps be pretended by Modern Deists, that the great Ignorance and undeniable corruptness of the whole Heathen World, has always been owing, not to any absolute Insufficiency of the Light of Nature it self, but merely to the fault of the several particular Persons, in not sufficiently improving that Light; and that Deists Now, in places where Learning and right Reason are cultivated, are well able to discover and explain all the Obligations and Motives of Morality, without believing any thing of Revelation. But this, even though it were true, (as, in the sense they intend, it by no means is; because, as has been before shown, there are several very necessary Truths not possible to be discovered with any certainty by the bare Light of Nature; But) supposing it, I say, to be true, that all the Obligations and Motives of Morality could possibly be discovered and explained clearly, by the mere light of Nature alone; yet even This would not at all prove, that there is no need of Revelation. For whatever the bare Natural Possibility was; 'tis certain in Fact,

*The great
Necessity
and Use
of Divine
Revelation*

† See an
excellent
passage of
Cicero to
this pur-
pose cited
above, pag.
196.

the Wisest Philosophers of Old, † never were able to do it to any effectual purpose, but always willingly acknowledged that they still wanted some higher Assistance. And as to the great Pretences of the Modern Deists; 'tis to be observed, that the clearness of moral Reasonings was much improved, and the Regard to a future State very much increased, even in Heathen Writers, after the coming of Christ. And almost all the Things that are said wisely and truly by modern Deists, are plainly borrowed from that Revelation, which they refuse to embrace; and without which, they could never have been able to have said the same things. Now indeed, when our whole Duty, with its true motives, is clearly revealed to us, its Precepts appear plainly agreeable to Reason; and Conscience readily approves what is Good, as it condemns what is Evil; Nay, after our Duty is thus made known to us, 'tis easy not only to see its agreement with Reason, but also to begin and deduce its Obligation from Reason. But had we been utterly destitute of all revealed Light, then, to have discovered our Duty in all points, with the true motives of it, merely by the help of natural Reason, would have been a work of Nicety, Pains and Labour; like gro-

ping for an unknown way in the obscure Twilight. What ground have any of our Modern Deists to imagine, that if they themselves had lived without the Light of the Gospel, they should have been wiser than *Socrates* and *Plato* and *Cicero*? How are they certain, they should have made such a right use of their Reason, as to have discovered the Truth *exactly*, without being any way led aside by Prejudice or Neglect? If their Lot had been among the *Vulgar*, how are they sure they should have been so happy, or so considerate, as not to have been involved in that Idolatry and Superstition, which overspread the whole World? If they had joined themselves to the *Philosophers*, which Sect would they have chosen to have followed? And what Book would they have resolved upon, to be the adequate Rule of their Lives and Conversations? Or, if they would have set up for *Themselves*, how are they certain they should have been skilful and unprejudiced enough, to have deduced the several Branches of their Duty, and applied them to the several Cases of Life, by Argumentation and dint of Reason? 'Tis one thing to see that those Rules of Life, which are before-hand plainly and particularly laid before us, are perfectly agreeable

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agreeable to Reason; and another thing to find out those Rules merely by the Light of Reason, without their having first been any otherwise made known. We see that even many of those, who profess to govern their Lives by the plain written Rule of an instituted and revealed Religion, are yet most miserably ignorant of their Duty; and how can any Man be sure he should have made so good Improvement of his Reason, as to have understood it perfectly in all its parts, without any such help? We see that many of those, who profess to believe firmly that great and everlasting Happiness, which Christ has promised to Obedience; and that great and eternal Misery, which Christ has threatened to Disobedience; are yet hurried away by their Lusts and Passions to transgress the Conditions of that Covenant, to which these Promises and these Threatnings are annexed: And how can any Man be sure he should be able to overcome those great Temptations, if these mighty Motives were less distinctly known, or less powerfully enforced? But suppose he could, and that by strength of Reason he could demonstrate to himself these things with all clearness and distinctness; yet could All Men do so? Assuredly all Men are not equally ca-

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people of being Philosophers, though all Men are equally obliged to be Religious. At least thus much is certain, that the Rewards and Punishments of another World, the great Motives of Religion, cannot be so powerfully enforced, to the influencing the Lives and Practise of all sorts of Men, by one who shall undertake to demonstrate the reality of them by abstract Reasons and Arguments; as by one who showing sufficient Credentials of his having been himself in that other State, shall assure them of the Truth and certainty of these things. But after all, the Question does not really lie here. The Truth, at the bottom, is plainly This: All the great Things that Modern Deists affect to say of right Reason, as to its sufficiency in discovering the Obligations and Motives of Morality; is only a Pretense, to be made use of, when they are opposing Christianity. At other times, and in reality, they have no hearty regard for Morality, nor for the natural Evidences of the Certainty of a Future State: They are willing enough to believe, that Men perish absolutely at Death, and so they have no concern to support effectually the Cause of Virtue, nor care to make out any consistent Scheme of Things; but unavoidably recur, in Truth, to

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downright Atheism. At least, in the Manners of most of them, 'tis too plain and apparent, that absolute Libertinism is the thing they really aim at; and however their Creed may pretend to be the Creed of Deists, yet almost always their Practise is the Practise of very Atheists.

*Yet God
was not
absolutely
Obliged, to
afford Men
the Help
of such a
Revela-
tion.*

4. To return therefore to the Argument. From what has been said upon this Head, it appears plainly, that 'tis agreeable to the natural Hopes and Expectations of Men, that is, of Right Reason duly improved; to suppose God making some particular Revelation of his Will to Mankind, which may supply the undeniable Defects of the Light of Nature. And at the same time, 'tis evident that such a thing is by no means unworthy of the Divine Wisdom, or inconsistent with any of the Attributes of God; but rather, on the contrary, most suitable to them. Consequently, considering the manifold Wants and Necessities of Men, and the abundant Goodness and Mercy of God; there is great Ground from right Reason and the Light of Nature, to believe, that God would not always leave Men wholly destitute of so needfull an Assistance, but would at some time or other actually afford it them. Yet it does not from hence at all follow

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follow, (as some have imagined,) that God is *Obliged* to make such a Revelation: For then it must needs have been given in all Ages, and to all Nations; and might have been claimed and demanded as of Justice, rather than wished for and desired as of Mercy and condescending Goodness. But the fore-mentioned considerations are such as might afford Men reasonable ground to *Hope* for some Favour of this kind, to be conferred at such Time, and in such Manner, and upon such Persons, as should seem best to supreme infinite Wisdom: At least, they might well dispose and prepare Men before-hand, whenever any Doctrine should come accompanied with just and good evidence of its being such a Revelation, to believe and embrace it with all readiness.

It has been made use of, by † a modern Author, as his principal and strongest Argument against the reasonableness of believing any Revelation at all; that it is confessed there has been no Revelation *universally* owned and embraced as such, either in all Ages, or by all Nations in any Age. He pretends to acknowledge, that if the Doctrine of Christianity was *universally* entertained, he would not doubt of its being truly a Revelation of

Want of
Un.versal-
lity, no
sufficient
Objection
against the
Truth of a
Revelation.
† Oracles
of Reason,
pag. 197,
&c.

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the Will of God to Mankind: But since, in Fact, there is no instituted Religion *universally* received as a Divine Revelation; and there are several Nations to whom the Christian Doctrine in particular, was never so much as preached, nor ever came to their knowledge at all; he concludes that, what is not universal and equally made known to *All Men*, cannot be needful for *Any*; and consequently, that there never was any real Want of a Revelation at all, nor any ground to think any further Assistance necessary to enable Men to answer all the Ends of their Creation, than the bare Light of Nature. This is the Summ and Strength of this Author's Reasoning; and herein all the Deniers of Revelation agree with him. Now, (not to take notice here, that it is by no means impossible, but all Men may be capable of receiving some Benefit from a Revelation, which yet a great part of them may never have heard of;) If these Mens Reasoning was true, it would follow by the same Argument, that neither was *Natural Religion* necessary to inable Men to answer the ends of their Creation. For, though all the Truths of Natural Religion, are indeed certainly discoverable by the due use of right Reason alone; yet

'tis

'tis evident *All Men* are not indued with the same Faculties and Capacities, nor have they All equally afforded to them the same means of making that discovery; As these Gentlemen themselves upon some occasions are willing enough to own, when they are describing the barbarous Ignorance of some poor Indian Nations: And consequently the knowledge of Natural Religion being, in Fact, by no means universal; it will follow that there is no great Necessity even of That; but that Men may do very well without it, in performing the Functions of the Animal Life, and directing themselves wholly by the Inclinations of Sense; And thus these Gentlemen must at last be forced to let go all moral Obligations, and so recur unavoidably to absolute Atheism. The Truth is: As God was not obliged, to make all his Creatures equal; to make Men, Angels; or to endue all Men, with the same Faculties and Capacities as Any; So neither is he bound to make all Men capable of the *same Degree* or the *same Kind* of Happiness, or to afford all Men the very same *means and opportunities* of obtaining it. There is ground enough, from the consideration of the manifest corruption of Humane Nature, to be so far sensible

ble of the Want of a Divine Revelation, as that right Reason and the Light of Nature it self will lead a wise and considerate Man to think it very probable, that the infinitely merciful and good God may actually vouchsafe to afford Men some such Supernatural Assistance: And consequently such a Person will be very willing, ready, and prepared to entertain a Doctrine which shall at any time come attended with just and good Evidence of its being truly a Revelation of the Will of God. But it does not at all from hence follow, either that God is absolutely bound to make such a Revelation; or that, if he makes it, it must equally be made to All Men; or that, since in Fact it is not made to All, therefore there is no Reason to believe that there is any Need or any Probability of its being made to Any.

VIII. *There is no other Religion now in the World, but the Christian, that has any just pretense or tolerable appearance of Reason, to be esteemed such a Divine Revelation: And therefore, if Christianity be not true, there is no Revelation of the Will of God at all made to Mankind.*

This Proposition will easily be granted by all Modern Unbelievers; and therefore

fore I need not be particular in the Proof of it.

The *Mahometan* Religion, was founded by a vitious Person, proposes ridiculous and trifling Doctrines to be believed, was propagated merely by violence and force of Arms, was confirmed by no publick and uncontestable Miracles, promises vain and sensual Rewards to its Professours, and is every way encompassed with numberless such Absurdities and inconsistencies, (as those who have given us Accounts of the Life of *Mahomet*, and the Nature of his Religion, have abundantly made out; and is sufficiently evident even from the *Alcoran* it self;) that there is no great Danger of Its imposing upon rational and considerate Men.

Of the
*Mahome-
tan Reli-
gion.*

The *Jewish* Religion, was founded wholly upon the Expectation of a *Jewish* Messiah to come; and the Time of his appearance was limited by such plain and determinate Prophecies, that what difficulties soever there may be in computing the very nice and exact Time of their Completion; or what different Periods soever may be fixed, from whence to begin several Computations; yet the Time of their being fulfilled, is now, in all possible ways of computing, so very far elapsed, that, if the *Christian* Doctrine be false, there

Of the
*Jewish
Religion.*

there is no Supposition left, upon which the *Jewish* Religion can, with any Colour of Reason, be believed to be true.

It being evident therefore, that either the Christian Revelation is true, or else (how great Want soever there may be of it) there is no such thing as Revelation at all; It remains that we proceed to consider what *positive and direct* Evidence there is, to prove the actual Truth of this Divine Revelation.

IX. The Christian Religion, considered in its primitive Simplicity, and as taught in the Holy Scriptures, has all the Marks and Proofs of, its being actually and truly a Divine Revelation; that any Divine Revelation, supposing it was true, could reasonably be imagined or desired to have.

The marks
of a Reli-
gion coming
from God.

The necessary Marks and Proofs of a Religion coming from God, are these. First, That the Duties it enjoins, be all such as are agreeable to our natural Notions of God; and perfective of the Nature, and conducive to the Happiness and Well-being of Men; And that the Doctrines it teaches, be all such, as, though not indeed discoverable by the bare Light of Nature, yet, when discovered by Revelation, may be consistent with, and agreeable

agreeable to, sound and unprejudiced Reason. For otherwise, no Evidence whatsoever, can be of so great force to prove that any Doctrine is True; as its being either Contradictory in it self, or wicked in its Tendency, is, to prove that it must necessarily be False. Secondly, For the same Reason, the *Motives* likewise, by which it is recommended to Mens Belief and Practice, and all the peculiar *Circumstances*, with which it is attended; must be such as are suitable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and fitted to amend the Manners and perfect the Minds of Men. Lastly, It must moreover be *positively and directly proved* to come from God, by such certain *Signs and Matters of Fact*, as may be undeniable Evidences of its Author's having actually a Divine Commission: For otherwise, as no Evidence can prove a Doctrine to come from God, if it be either Impossible or Wicked in it self; so on the other hand, neither can any degree of goodness or excellency in the Doctrine it self, make it certain, but only highly probable, to have come from God, unless it has moreover some positive and direct Evidence of its being actually Revealed.

The entire Proof therefore of this Proposition, must be made by an

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an Induction of particulars, as follows.

X. First, The Practical Duties which the Christian Religion enjoins, are all such, as are most agreeable to our natural Notions of God, and most persuasive of the Nature, and conducive to the Happiness and Well-being of Men. That is, Christianity even in this single respect, as containing alone and in one consistent System all the wise and good Precepts, (and those improved, augmented, and exalted to the highest degree of Perfection,) that ever were taught singly and scatteredly, and many times but very corruptly, by the several Schools of the Philosophers; and this without any mixture of the fond, absurd, and superstitious Practises of any of those Philosophers; ought to be embraced and practised by all rational and considering Deists, who will act consistently, and steddily pursue the consequences of their own Principles; at least the best Scheme and Set of Philosophy, that ever was set up in the World, and highly probable, even though it had no external Evidence, to be of Divine Original.

The Proposition proved, in the several Instances of Duty.

This Proposition is so very evident, that the greatest Adversaries of the Christian Institution have never been able to deny it any otherwise, than by confounding the Inventions of

Men,

Men, the Superstitious Practises of particular Persons, or the corrupt Additions of certain particular Churches or Societies of Christians, with the pure and simple Precepts of the Gospel of Christ. In all those Instances of Duty, which pure and uncorrupt Christianity enjoyns, the Proposition is manifest and altogether undeniable. The Duties of *Love*, *Fear*, and *Adoration*, which the Christian Religion obliges us to render unto God, are so plainly incumbent upon us from the consideration of the excellent Attributes of the Divine Nature, and our relation to him as our Creatour and Preserver; that no Man who considers, can think himself free from the Obligations which our Religion lays upon him to practise these Duties; without denying the very Being of God, and acting contrary to the Reason and all the natural Notions of his own Mind. Its placing the true and acceptable Worship of God, not so much in any positive and ritual Observances, as in approaching him with pure Hearts and undefiled Bodies, with unfeigned Repentance for all past Miscarriages, and sincere Resolutions of constant Obedience for the future; in praying to him for whatever we want, and returning him our most hearty Thanks
for

for whatever good things we receive, with such Dependence and Humility, such Submission, Trust and Reliance, as are the proper Affections of dutiful Children; all this is plainly most agreeable to our Natural Notions and Apprehensions of God. And that the Prayers of sinful and depraved Creatures, sincerely repenting, should be offered up to God, and become prevalent with him, through and by the Intercession of a *Mediator*; is very consonant to right and unprejudiced Reason; as I shall have occasion to show more particularly hereafter, when I come to consider the Articles of our *Belief*. Again; The Duties of *Justice*, *Equity*, *Charity*, and *Truth*, which the Christian Religion obliges us to exercise towards *Men*, are so apparently reasonable in themselves, and so directly conducive to the Happiness of Mankind; that their unalterable Obligation is not only in great measure deducible, from the bare Light of Nature and right Reason; but even those Men also, who have broken through all the Bonds of natural Religion it self, and the original Obligations of Virtue, have yet thought it necessary for the preservation of Society and the well-being of Mankind, that the Observation of these Duties to some degree, should be enforced by

the Penalties of humane Laws. And the additional Improvements, which our Saviour has made to these Duties, by commanding his Disciples to be *Matt. 5;* as it were Lights in the World, and *16; &c.*

Examples of good Works to all Men; to be so far from injuring others, that on the contrary they should not indulge themselves in any degree of Anger or Passion; to seek reconciliation immediately upon any Difference or Offense that may arise; to bear injuries patiently, rather than return evil for evil; to be always willing to forgive one another their trespasses, as they all expect forgiveness at the hands of God; to be kind and charitable to all Men; to assist readily, and be willing to do all good Offices, not only to their Friends, but even to their bitterest Enemies also; in a Word, to raise their Virtue and Goodness far above the common Practise of Men, extending their Charity universally in imitation of the Goodness of God himself, who maketh his Sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth Rain on the just and on the unjust: These Precepts, I say, are such, as no unprejudiced Philosopher would have been unwilling to confess were the utmost Improvements of Morality, and to the highest degree Perfective of humane

Nature. In like manner; The Duties of Sobriety, Temperance, Patience and Contentment, which our Religion enjoins us to practice in Our selves, are so undeniably agreeable to the inward Constitution of humane Nature, and so perfective of it, that the principal Design of all true Philosophy has ever been to recommend and set off these Duties to the best Advantage; Though, as the Philosophers themselves have always confessed, no Philosophy was ever able to govern Mens practise effectually in these respects. But the additional Precepts, and the new Weight and Authority, which our Saviour has added to his Instructions of this kind, teaching his Disciples to govern their very Thoughts, Desires and Inclinations, to contemn and get above all the Desires of this present World, and to set their Affections principally upon that which is to come; These are the things, which, when the Christian Religion was in its primitive and purest State, worked Men up actually to such a Pitch of cheerful and generous Obedience to the Laws of God, and taught them to obtain such a complete Victory over the Word, and over all the Desires and Appetites of Sense; as the best Philosophers have acknowledged, their Instructions were

Mat. 5:
28.

Mat. 6;
19, 24,
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never able to do. Lastly, even those *positive and external Observances*, (the *Two Sacraments*,) which are instituted in the Christian Religion, as means and assistances to keep Men steadfast in the practise of those *great and moral Duties* which are the *weightier Matters of the Law*; even those positive Institutions (I say) are so free from all appearance of Superstition and Vanity, and so wisely fitted to the end for which they were designed, that no Adversaries of Christianity have ever been able to object any thing at all against the Things themselves, but only against certain Corruptions and Superstitions, which some, who call themselves Christians, have, directly in opposition to the true Design of Christianity, introduced and annexed to them. For, what reasonable Man can pretend to say, that 'tis any way unreasonable or Superstitious, for every Member of a Society to be solemnly admitted into his Profession, by a plain and significant Rite, intitling him to all the Privileges, and charging him with all the Obligations, which belong to the Members of that Society as such? which is the Design of *One of the Sacraments*: Or, that 'tis unreasonable and Superstitious, for Men frequently to commemorate with all Thankfulness the

Love of their greatest Benefactor, and humbly and solemnly to renew their Obligations and Promises of Obedience to him? which is the Design of the *Other*.

This, a great Evidence of a Religion coming from God.

Let now any impartial Person judge, whether this be not a wise and excellent Institution of *practical* Religion; highly conducive to the Happiness of Mankind; and worthy to be established by a Revelation from God, when Men had confessedly corrupted themselves to such a degree, that not only the Light of Nature and right Reason was altogether insufficient to restore true Piety, but even That Light it self (as *Cice-*

* ——— *ut Naturæ Lumen nusquam appareat. Cic. Tusc. Qu. lib. 3. See this Passage cited before at large, pag. 158.*

ro * expressly acknowledges), no where appeared. Let any impartial Person judge, whether a Religion that tends thus manifestly to the recovery

of the rational part of God's Creation, to restore Men to the Imitation and Likeness of God, and to the Dignity and highest Improvement of their Nature; has not within it self an intrinsic and very powerful Evidence of its being truly Divine. Let any one read the *fifth*, *sixth* and *seventh* Chapters of *St Matthew's Gospel*, and judge if they do not, as it were, set before his Eyes such a lovely Image and Representation of true Virtue, as

Plato

Plato * said could not but charm Men with the highest degree of love and admiration imaginable. In a Word, let any Man of an honest and sincere Mind consider, whether That practical Doctrine has not even *in it self* the greatest Marks of a Divine Original; wherein whatsoever things are *true*, Phil. 4, 8; whatsoever things are *honest*, whatsoever things are *just*, whatsoever things are *pure*, whatsoever things are *lovely*, whatsoever things are *of good report*, if there be any *Virtue*, if there be any thing *praise-worthy*; all these, and these only, are the things that are earnestly recommended to Mens practise. What wise Precept was ever delivered by any Philosopher of any Sect, which is not more plainly laid down by our Saviour and his Apostles? And not only so; but inforced moreover with greater Efficacy and Strength? founded upon nobler and more consistent Principles? urged with greater Weight and Authority? and pressed with more powerful and affecting Arguments? Nay, neither is This all the difference, even in respect barely of the Excellency of the Doctrine it self. For the Philosophers taught indeed many excellent moral Truths; but some upon one occasion

* *Formam ipsam, & tanquam Faciem honesti; quæ si Oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores, ut ait Plato, excitarer Sui. Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.*

and upon one Set of Principles, some upon another; and every one of them were mistaken in some Instances of Duty, and mingled particular Superstitions and false Notions with their good Instructions, and built their Doctrine upon no sure Foundation of consistent Principles; and All of them (as has been before shown) were very imperfect and deficient, and far from being able to make up an entire and complete Scheme of the whole Duty of Man in all Cases.

* Ἰούχ' ὅπ' ἀλλότεια
 ἔτι τὰ Πλάτων' δι-
 δάγματα τῶ Χριστοῦ ἀλλ'
 ὅπ' ἐκ ἐστὶ πάντῃ ὁμοτα-
 ῶσπερ ἔδδ' τὰ τῶ ὁλ-
 λων — ἐκείν' οὐ πῆς;
 ἀπὸ μίρεσ' ἧς σπερματικῆς
 δεῖν λόγῳ τὸ σφῶς ὁρῶν,
 χαλῶς ἐφθόγγετο —
 ὅσα ἐν τῷ πασι χαλῶς
 εἶρηται, ἡμῶν οὗ χρεῖστα-
 γῶν ὅσι. *Justin Apolog.*
 I.

Quod si extitisset aliquis, qui veritatem sparsam per singulos, per sectasq; diffusam, colligeret in unum ac redigeret in corpus; is profecto non dissentiret a nobis. Sed hoc nemo facere, nisi veri peritus ac sciens, potest. Verum autem non nisi ejus scire est, qui sit doctus a Deo. *Lactant.*
lib. 7.

But now, * to put together all the wise and good Precepts that ever were delivered by any wise Men of any Sect and in any Age; to improve and exalt every one of them, to the highest possible degree of excellency and perfection; to separate and lay aside all the superstitious Opinions and Practises, that had been mixed by all or any of the different Sects of Philosophers, or Teachers of Religion in any Nation, with their respective moral Instructions; and to supply all those Doctrines, wherein both

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both moral Philosophy and the additional Institutions of all Religions in the World, had in the whole been hitherto altogether deficient; and all this, in one plain, entire and regular System, upon the Foundation of certain and consistent Principles; This is the peculiar Character of the Christian Institution; and all this cannot with any colour of Reason, be imagined to have ever been done by any Man, but one sent immediately from God. Upon this consideration alone, all sincere Deists (if any such there be) who really are what they pretend to be, who believe the Being and Attributes of God, and are firmly convinced of the Obligations of Virtue and natural Religion, and the certainty of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments; must needs by their own Principles be strongly inclined to embrace the Christian Religion; to believe, at least to *hope* confidently, that a Doctrine so plainly fitted to recover Men out of their universally corrupt Estate, and restore them to the Knowledge and Favour of God, is truly Divine; and to entertain it with all cheerfulness, as what in it self has those manifold Marks of Goodness and Perfection, which are themselves sufficient to satisfy a good Man, that it cannot be any thing else than a

† Sed si vel casu id
efficeret, certissime phi-
losopharetur; & quamvis
non posset divinis testi-
moniis illa defendere, ta-
men seipsam veritas illu-
straret suo lumine. La-
fant. lib. 7.

Revelation from God, re-
ven † though it had
wanted all those outward
Proofs, and divine and
miraculous Testimonies,
which shall hereafter be
mentioned in their proper
place.

XI. Secondly, *The Motives, by which
the Christian Religion inforces the Practise
of the Duties it enjoyns, are such as are
most suitable to the excellent Wisdom of
God; and most answerable to the natural
Expectations of Men.*

Of the
acceptability
of
true Re-
pentance,
as a Mo-
tive to O-
bedience.

I. The *Acceptableness of true Repen-
tance*, in the sight of God; and the
certain *Assurance of Pardon*, upon such
Repentance; which the Christian Re-
ligion affords us; is a most powerful
and necessary *Motive* to frail and sinful
Creatures, to incourage and support
them effectually in the practise of their
Duty. 'Tis indeed in general evi-
dently more agreeable to right Reason
and to Mens natural Notions of God,
to believe him placable and merciful
and willing to forgive. But since at
the same time it cannot be proved
by any Arguments from Reason, that
God is absolutely obliged to forgive; and
'tis confessedly evident, that it be-
comes the Supreme Governour of the
Universe, to vindicate the Honour and
Authority

Authority of his Laws and Government, to give some Evidences of his Hatred and Indignation against Sin, and sometimes by instances of Severity to prevent Sinners from abusing his Mercy and Patience; no less than that 'tis agreeable to his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, to suffer his Anger to be by some means appeased: No Motive in this case can be imagined more expedient and powerful, to encourage Sinners to return to the practise of their Duty, and to perswade them to continue therein immoveable for the future; nothing can be imagined more seasonable and satisfactory to the Mind of Man, and more agreeable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and worthy of the supreme and infinitely merciful Governour of all Things; than such a positive Declaration of the *Acceptableness of sincere Repentance*, and such an authentick Assurance of *Pardon and Forgiveness* thereupon, as under the Christian Dispensation the Divine Goodness and Mercy has found means to afford unto us, in such manner as is at the same time abundantly consistent with the Honour and Dignity of the Laws of God, and with his irreconcilable Hatred against all Unrighteousness and Sin.

2. That

Of the di-
vine Assist-
ance, as
another
Motive to
Obedience.

The Evidences of Natural

2. That divine and supernatural Assistance, which, under the Christian Dispensation, they who sincerely endeavour to obey the Will of God, have encouragement to hope for, upon all necessary occasions; is another powerful Motive, to support Men effectually in the Practise of their Duty. The wisest of the Philosphers, were so far sensible of the great Corruption and Depravity of Humane Nature in its present State; they were sensible that such was the Carelessness, Stupidity, and Want of Attention, of the greater part of Mankind; so many the early Prejudices and false Notions taken in by evil Education; so strong and violent the unreasonable Lusts, Appetites and Desires of Sense; and so great the Blindness, introduced by superstitious Opinions, vitious Customs, and debauched Practises through the World; that (as has been before shewn,) they themselves openly confessed, they had very little hope of ever being able to reform Mankind with any considerably great and universal Success, by the bare force of Philosophy and right Reason; but that, to produce so great a change, and enable Men effectually to conquer all their corrupt Affections, there was need of some supernatural and divine Assistance, or the immediate Interposition

position of God himself. Now This divine Assistance is vouchsafed to Men under the Christian Dispensation in such a manner, as (from what has been already said concerning the judgment of the Wifest of the Antient Philosophers in this matter,) appears to be undeniably agreeable to the natural Expectations of right Reason, and suitable to the best and worthiest Notions that Men have ever by the Light of Nature been able to frame to themselves concerning the Attributes and Perfections of God. If ye, says Luk. 11, your Saviour, being Evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him? The Effect of this divine Assistance, evidenced it self in a very visible and remarkable manner in the Primitive Times, by † the sudden wonderful and total Reformation of far greater Numbers of wicked Men, than ever were brought to Repentance by the Teaching and Exhortations of all the Philosophers in the World. And even at this Day, notwithstanding all the Corruptions introduced among Christians, I think it can hardly

† Da mihi virum, qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrenatus; paucissimis Dei verbis tam placidum, quam ovem, reddam. Da libidinosum. &c. Laſtani, lib. 3.

Παρεῖ μὲν τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν εἰς πλ., &c. Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 1. See this Passage cited above. pag. 194.

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ly be denied by any Unbelievers of Revelation, but that there are among us many more Persons of all conditions, who worship God in sincerity and simplicity of Heart, and live in the constant practise of all Righteousness, Holiness, and true Virtue; than ever were found in any of the most civilized Nations, and most improved by Philosophy in the heathen World.

Of the clear Discovery of future Rewards and Punishments, as another Motive to Obedience.

3. The *Rewards and Punishments* which the Christian Religion proposes to Obedience or Disobedience; are a *Motive*, perfectly agreeable to Mens natural Hopes and Fears, and worthy of God to make known by positive and expresse Revelation. For since 'tis confessedly suitable to the divine Wisdom, to make variety of Creatures, endued with very different Powers and Faculties, and capable of very different kinds and degrees of Improvement; and since all rational Creatures, by reason of that natural Liberty of Will which is essentially necessary to their being such, cannot but be capable of exalting and improving their Nature by the practise of Virtue and the Imitation of God, and on the contrary of depraving and debasing their Nature by the practise of Vice and Alienation of themselves from God; it follows undeniably, (as has been be-
fore

fore shown by a more particular deduction,) that 'tis highly agreeable to the Light of Nature and to right Reason to suppose, that God, the Supreme Governour and Disposer of all things, will finally make a just and suitable distinction between his Creatures, by the distribution of proportionable Rewards and Punishments. Nevertheless, both the Truth it self of these final Rewards and Punishments, was so far called in question, and rendred doubtful and uncertain, by the Disputations even of the Wisest Philosophers that ever lived; and those who did in general believe the Truth and Certainty of them, had yet so very blind and obscure Notions of What Nature and Kind they were to be; having their imaginations strangely prejudiced with poetical Fictions, and fabulous Stories; that the setting this matter clear and right, and the supplying this single defect in the Light of Nature, was a thing highly worthy of Divine Revelation: It being plainly a very different thing, and of very different Force as to the influencing Mens Actions, for Men to be able to argue themselves into a *reasonable Expectation* of future Rewards and Punishments; and to be *certainly assured* of the reality of them by express Testimony of Divine Revelation. And accordingly

accordingly by Divine Revelation in the Gospel, this defect of the Light of Nature is now actually supplied in such a manner; Life and Immortality are so brought to Light; and the Wrath of God is so revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of Men; that this very thing, the clear and distinct and consistent Account which the Gospel gives us of these final Rewards and Punishments, (which, though indeed in themselves so absolutely necessary, that without them no tolerable Vindication could be made of the Attributes of God, yet neither by the Light of Nature, nor by any positive Institution of Religion, excepting only the Christian, were they ever so clearly and plainly represented to Mankind, as to have their full and proper effect upon the Hearts and Lives of Men,) This very thing (I say,) the clear, distinct, and consistent Account, which the Gospel gives us of these final Rewards and Punishments, is it self no contemptible Argument of the Truth and Divine Authority of the Christian Revelation. By the certain Knowledge of these Rewards and Punishments it is, that the Practice of Virtue is now established upon a sure Foundation: Men have now abundantly sufficient encouragement, to support

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support them in their Choice of Virtue, and in their constant adherence to it, in all Cases and under all Circumstances that can be supposed: There is now sufficient Weight on the side of Virtue, to enable Men to conquer all the Temptations of the Devil, the Flesh, and the World; and to despise the severest Threatnings, even Death it self: *This is the victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.* The only Difficulty in this matter, arising from the *Duration* of the final Punishment of the Wicked, shall be considered when I come to discourse of the Articles of our Belief.

XII. Thirdly, *the peculiar Manner and Circumstances, with which the Christian Religion enjoyns the Duties, and urges the Motives before-mentioned; are exactly consonant to the Dictates of sound Reason, or the unprejudiced Light of Nature; and most wisely perfective of it.*

For, what can be more agreeable to the Light of Nature, and more evidently perfective of it; than to have those Duties, which Nature hints at only in general, explained fully and largely, and urged in particular, and inculcated upon the meanest capacities with great Weight and Authority, and exemplified in the Lives of holy Persons

The Proposition proved by particular instances.

The Evidences of Natural

Persons proposed as Patterns for our Imitation? What can be more perfective of the Light of Nature, than to have those great *Motives* of Religion, the Rewards and Punishments of a Future State which Nature only *obscurely* points at, described to us most *plainly, affectionately, and lively*? What can be more perfective of the Light of Nature, than to have the *means* of attoning for Sin, which Nature discovers only the want of, plainly declared and exhibited to us? What can be more perfective of the Light of Nature, than such a discovery of the *heinousness* of Sin and the necessity of *Holiness*, as the Death of Christ and the Purity of the Gospel does make unto us? In fine, What can more effectually perfect the Religion of Nature, than the gathering together the *Worshippers* of the True God, into *One Body*? the causing them to enter into solemn Obligations, to live suitably to their Holy Profession? the giving them gracious Assurances that true Repentance shall be accepted for what is past, and sincere renewed Obedience for the future? the uniting them by a few positive Rites in one Religious as well as Civil Communion, for mutual Assistance and Improvement? and the establishing a certain Order or perpetual Succession of Men, whose constant Business it may be, to explain the great Duties of Religi-

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on to persons of meaner Capacities; to urge and inforce the Practise of them; to set before Men the reasons of their Duty, and the Necessity of it; to shew them clearly and impartially the danger of neglecting it, and the great advantage of performing it sincerely; in a word, to instruct the Ignorant, and to admonish the Wicked; to reduce those that err, to comfort the doubting, to reprove the obstinate; and to be Instruments of conveying to Men all proper Assistances, to enable them to perform their whole Duty effectually?

If these things be the Ordinances of One, who came to contradict the dictates of right Reason, and not to perfect the Law of Nature, but to destroy it; then let all wise Men forever forsake the Assemblies of Christians, and profess themselves again Disciples of the Philosophers. But if these things be perfectly agreeable to Nature and right Reason, and tend exceedingly to the supplying the Deficiencies thereof; then let none under pretense of maintaining Natural Religion, revile and blaspheme the Christian, least they be found Liars unto God.

The many Contentions indeed, about Opinions of great Uncertainty and little Importance, which, to the very great Scandal of Christianity, have

An answer
to the Ob-

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in Christians.

in several Ages of the Church, been with unreasonable Zeal kept up, instead of promoting the universal Interest of true practical Religion and Virtue; have, it must be confessed, given some *Occasion* to the Enemies of our most holy Religion, to blaspheme and revile both It, and the Teachers of it. But though such things as these, have indeed afforded them too plausible an *Occasion*, yet they have not given them any just *Reason*, so to do. For the acknowledged corruption of a Doctrine or Institution in any particular *part* or respect, is by no means a weighty or real Objection against the Truth of the *whole*. And there has always been extant a sufficient Rule, to enable sincere Persons, in the midst of the greatest disputes and contentions, to distinguish the *Doctrine of God* from the *Opinions of Men*; The Doctrine of Christ having been plainly and fully delivered in our Saviour's own Discourses, and in the Writings of his immediate Followers the Apostles, who cannot with any Reason be imagined either to have misrepresented it, or to have represented it imperfectly. But besides: I think it can hardly be denied even by our Adversaries themselves, but that in all Times and Places, wherein Christian

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nity has been professed in any tolerable degree of Purity; whatever contentions and disputes may have arisen about particular, and perhaps unnecessary Doctrines; yet the great, the most necessary, and fundamental Doctrines of Religion; concerning God, and Providence; concerning the gracious Method, of God's Reconciliation with penitent Sinners; concerning the necessity of true Piety, Righteousness and Sobriety; concerning a Judgment to come, and the final Reward of the Righteous, and the Punishment of wicked Men, in such a manner as will effectually vindicate both the Justice and Goodness, the Wisdom and Honour of God; these things (I say) have, notwithstanding all Differences concerning smaller Matters, been nevertheless at the same time universally and constantly taught, pressed and inculcated upon Persons of all Capacities, by the earnest and continual preaching of all the Ministers of the Gospel; with an effect infinitely more considerable and visible, both in Extent and Duration, than by the Teaching of any Heathen Philosophers that ever lived: Which shows undeniably the Excellency at least, if not the Divine Authority of the Christian Institution, in this particular respect.

XIII. Fourthly, *All the [Credend or] Doctrines, which the true, simple, and uncorrupted Christian Religion teaches; (that is, not only those plain Doctrines which it requires to be believed as fundamental and of necessity to eterna' Sa'vation, but even All the Doctrines which it teaches as Matters of Truth;) are, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare Reason unassisted with Revelation, yet, when discovered by Revelation, apparently most agreeable to sound unprejudiced Reason; have every one of them a natural Tendency, and a direct and powerful Influence, to reform Mens minds and correct their manners; and do together make up an infinitely more consistent and rational Scheme of belief, than any that the wisest of the antient Philosophers ever did, or the cunningest of modern Unbelievers can invent or contrive.*

*Of the One
Supreme
God.*

1. *That there is One only living and true God; existing of himself, by the Necessity of his own Nature; absolutely Independent, Eternal, Omnipresent, Unchangeable, Incorruptible; without Body, Parts or Passions; of infinite Power, Knowledge, and Wisdom; of perfect Liberty, and Freedom of Will; of infinite Goodness, Justice and Truth, and all other possible Perfections; so as to be absolutely Self-sufficient to his own infinite and unalterable Happiness: This*

is, not only the first and principal Article of the Christian Faith, but also the first and most evident Truth that the Light of Nature it self teaches us; being clearly demonstrable, upon certain and undeniable Principles of right Reason.

2. That this Supreme Self-Existent Cause and Father of all Things, did before all Ages, in an incomprehensible manner, by his Almighty Power and Will, beget or produce a Divine Person; styled the *Logos*, the *Word*, or *Wisdom*, or Son, of God; * God, of

Of the Only-begotten Son of God.

God; in whom dwells the fulness and perfection of Divine Attributes, excepting Independency or Self-Origination; being the Image of the Invisible God, the brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person; having been in the beginning with God; partaker with him of his Glory before the World was; the Upholder of all things by the Word of his Power; and himself over all (by Communication of his Father's Glory) God blessed for ever: This Doctrine (I say,) though not indeed discoverable by bare Reason, yet, when made known by Revelation, appears plainly very consistent with right Reason, and 'tis manifest) contains nothing that implies any manner of Absurdity or Contradiction in it.

* Θεὸς ἐκ Θεοῦ, in contradistinction to Ἀυτῷ. &c.

Col. 1, 15.
Heb. 1, 3.
Ἀπαύλας
αὐτῆς τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.
Joh. 1, 2.
17, 5.
Heb. 1, 3.
Rom. 9, 5.
& Joh. 1, 1.

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Indeed

Indeed if any Men, pretending to be *wise above and beyond what is written*, have at any time given such Explications of the *Manner* how the Son of God derived his Being from the Father, or have offered such Accounts of his *Nature and Attributes*, as can by any just and necessary consequence be reduced to imply or involve any Contradiction; (which

† It is not to be denied but that the Schoolmen, who abounded in Wit and Leisure, though very few among them had either exact Skill in the Holy Scriptures, or in Ecclesiastical Antiquity, and the Writings of the ancient Fathers of the Christian Church: I say, it cannot be denied but that these speculative and very acute Men, who wrought a great part of their Divinity out of their own Brains, as Spiders do Cobwebs out of their own Bowels, have started a thousand Subtilties about this Mystery, such as

no Christian is bound to trouble his Head withal; much less is it necessary for him to understand those *Niceties*, which we may reasonably presume that they who talk of them did themselves never thoroughly understand; and least of all, is it necessary to believe them. *Arch-B. Tillotson, Sermon concerning the Unity of the Divine Nature.*

It were to be wished, that some *Religionists* did not here symbolize too much with the *Atheists*, in affecting to represent the *Mystery* of the Christian *Trinity*, as a thing directly contradictory to all humane Reason and Understanding. *Cudworth's System, pag. 560*

perhaps many of the Schoolmen have but too justly been accused of doing;) such Explications are without all controversy False, and very injurious to Religion. But as this Doctrine is delivered in Scripture; I think, there is nothing in it in any degree contrary to Right Reason; as I have elsewhere indeavoured to shew in a particular *Discourse*, to which I refer the Reader.

Now the same that is said of the Son, may in like manner, with little Variation, be, very agreeably to right Reason, understood concerning the *Original Proceſſion* or *Manner of Derivation* of the *Holy Spirit* likewise from the Father.

Of the Holy Spirit.

3. That the Universe, the Heavens and the Earth, and all things that are therein, were Created and Made by God; and this, through the Operation of his Son, That Divine Word, or Wisdom of the Father, by whom the Scripture says that God made the Worlds; that by him God created all things; that by him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities or Powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist; that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made: All this likewise, is very agreeable to sound unprejudiced Reason. For, that neither the whole, nor any part of the World; neither the Form, nor Motion, nor Matter of the World, could exist of it self, by any Necessity in its own Nature; is abundantly demonstrable from undeniable principles of Reason; as has been shown in my former Discourse. Consequently, both the whole World,

Of the Creation of the Universe.

*Heb. 1, 2.
Eph. 3, 9.
Col. 1, 16.*

Joh. 1, 3.

and all the variety of things that now exist therein, must of Necessity have received both their being it self, and also their form and manner of being, from God the alone Supreme and Self-existent Cause; and must needs depend upon his Good-pleasure every moment, for the continuance and preservation of that Being. Accordingly, if we set aside the *Epicureans*, (whose absurd Hypothesis has long since been given up even by all Atheists themselves;) and some very few others, who with no less Absurdity contended that the World was in its present Form Self-existent and Necessary; All the Philosophers of all Ages, (even † not excepting those who held the *Eternity* of the World,) have unanimously agreed in this great Truth, that the World evidently owes both its Being and Preservation to God the Supreme Cause and Author of all Things. And then, that God made the World by the Operation of his Son; though this could not indeed be known certainly without express Revelation; yet is it by no means incredible, or contrary to right Reason. For, to the judgment of Reason, it is the same thing, whether God made the World immediately by himself, or mediately by the Ministration of a Second Principle. And what *Plato* and his Followers

† See former Volume, pag. 24 & 35.

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lowers have said concerning that Eternal Noûs, or Mind, whom they frequently stile Δημιουργός the Minister or Workman by whom God framed all things; proves undeniably thus much at least, that the Doctrines delivered in Scripture concerning this Matter, cannot be rejected as inconsistent and irreconcilable with right Reason.

4. That, about the Space of 6000 Of the Formation of the Earth. Years since, *the Earth was without Form and Void*, that is, a confused *Chaos*; out of which God framed this beautiful and useful Fabrick we now inhabit, and stocked it with the Seeds of all kinds of Plants, and formed upon it *Man* and all the other Species of Animals it is now furnished with; is also very agreeable to right Reason. For though the precise Time indeed, when all this was done, could not now have been known exactly, without Revelation; yet even at this day, there are remaining many considerable and very strong rational Proofs, which make it exceedingly probable, (separate from the Authority of Revelation,) that this present Frame and Constitution of the Earth, cannot have been of a very much longer date. The universal Tradition delivered down from all the most antient Nations of the World, both learned and barbarous; The constant and agreeing *Doctrine* of all antient Philosophers

Philosophers and Poets, concerning the Earth's being formed within such a Period of Time, out of Water or a Chaos; The manifold *Absurdities and Contradictions* of those few Accounts, which pretend to a much greater Antiquity; The *Number of Men*, with which the Earth is at present inhabited; The *late Original of Learning and all useful Arts and Sciences*; The *Impossibility*, that universal Deluges, or other Accidents, should at certain long Periods have oft-times destroyed far the greatest part of Mankind, with the Memory of all former Actions and Inventions, and yet never have happened to destroy them All; The changes that must necessarily fall out naturally in the Earth, in vast length of Time, by the Sinking and Washing down of Mountains, the Consumption of Water by Plants, and innumerable other such like Accidents; These (I say) and many more Arguments, drawn from Nature, Reason and Observation, make That account of the Time of the Earth's Formation exceedingly probable in itself, which from the Revelation delivered in Scripture-History we believe to be certain.

of the continual Government of Providence

5. That the same God who created all things by the Word of his Power, and upholds and preserves them by his continual Concourse, does also by his All-wise Providence perpetually govern

govern and direct the issues and events of things; takes care of this lower World, and of all, even the smallest things, that are therein; disposes things in a regular order and succession in every Age, from the beginning of the World to its final Period; and inspects, with a more particular and especial regard, the moral Actions of Men: This, as it is far more expressly, clearly, and constantly taught in Scripture, than in any of the Writings of the Philosophers; so it is also highly agreeable to right and true Reason. For, that an *Omnipresent* and infinitely Wise Being, cannot but know every thing that is done in every part of the Universe, and with equal ease take notice of the minutest things as of the greatest; That an infinitely *powerful* Being, must needs govern and direct every thing in such manner and to such ends, as he knows to be best and fittest in the whole; so far as is consistent with that Liberty of Will, which he has made essential to all rational Creatures; And that an infinitely *Just and Good* Governour, cannot but take more particular and exact notice of the moral Actions of all his rational Creatures, and how far they are conformable or not conformable to the Rules he has set them; All this (I say) is most evidently agreeable

able to right Reason, and, as has been before shown, deducible from it.

Of Paradise, and the Loss of it by Sin.

6. That God, after the Formation of the Earth, created Man at first upright and innocent, and placed him in a happy and paradisiacal State, where he enjoyed plenty and abundance of all things without labour or sorrow; And that Sin was the original Cause, that now on the contrary the very ground is cursed and barren for our sake, and in sorrow we eat of it all the Days of our Life; that thorns also and thistles are brought forth to us, and in the sweat of our face we eat bread, till we return unto the ground; This likewise is very reasonable and credible in it self: As appears, not only from the abstract consideration of the nature of the thing; but also from the general Opinion that the antient learnedest Heathens entertained, upon very obscure and uncertain Tradition, that the original State of Man was innocent and simple, and the Earth whereon they dwelt, *

* Τὸ παλαιὸν πᾶντ' ἦν ἀλφειῶν καὶ ἀλευρῶν πλή-
θον, καδάπερ καὶ νῦν κό-
ρεως καὶ κρήναι δ' ἔρρε-
ον, αἱ μὲν ὕδατος, κα-
λακτοὶ δ' ἄλλαι καὶ ὁ-
κώας αἱ μὲν μέλιτος,
αἱ δ' οἶνου, τινὲς δ' ἐλαίου
ὑπὸ πλησμονῆς δ' οἱ ἀν-
θρώποι καὶ τεύχεα, εἰς ὕβριν ἐξέπεσον. Ζεὺς δ' αἰσίου καὶ
κατάστατον, ἠφάνισεν πάντα, καὶ διὰ πόνον τ' βίον ἀπέσειε.
Cassius Indus apud Strabon. lib. 15.

fruitful of it self, and abun-
dant with all plenty; but that
God, for the Sin of Man,
changed this Happy Constitu-
tion of things, and made
Labour necessary for the sup-
port of our Lives.

7. That

7. That in process of Time, after *Of the Flood.*
the first entrance of Sin into the World,

Men by degrees corrupted themselves
more and more; till at length God,

for the † punishment of
their Sin and incorrigi-

bleness, brought upon them

a general Flood, which

destroyed them all, ex-

cept a few Persons pre-

served for the restoration

of humane Race; is a

Truth delivered down to

us, not only by Autho-

rity of Scripture, but

also by the concurrent

Testimony of almost all

Heathen Philosophers and

Poets: And the Histories of all Na-

tions backwards, terminate in it: And,

(which is the most remarkable thing

of all, because it is a demonstrative and

ocular Proof of the *Universality* of some

such kind of Dissolution;) the present

visible Frame and Constitution of the

Earth throughout; the Disposition and

Situation of the several Strata of dif-

ferent kinds of Matter, whereof it is

composed; the numberless Shells of

Fishes, Bones of other Animals, and

parts of all kinds of Plants, which

in every Country and in almost every

place are at great variety of Depths

found inclosed in Earth, in Clay, in

Stones

† Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ γῆ διεμύ-
μοιρεν ἐξήπλητο ἐγγυ-
πο ἐν αὐτοῖς, πολλὰ πῶ-
δινητῶ καὶ πολλάκις ἀνα-
κεραννυμένη, τὸ δὲ ἀνδρώ-
πινον ἡδὲ ἐπικρέτει,
τότε οὐδὲ ὁ Θεὸς Ζεὺς,
ἄτε δυνάμει καὶ δυνάμει
τὰ πάντα, ἐνοήσας γέ-
νη ἐπεικὺς ἀδελφῶς δια-
πείρω, δίκην αὐτοῖς
ἐπιδέναι βελήδει, &c.
Plato in Critia sive At-
lantico.

Stones, and in all sorts of Matter; are such *apparent* Demonstrations of the Earth's having been *some time or other* (the *whole Surface* of it at least) in a state of Fluidity; that whosoever has seen the Collections of this kind made by the very ingenious *Dr Woodward* and others, must in a manner abandon all Use both of his Senses and Reason, if he can in the least doubt of this Truth.

Of Gods revealing himself to the Patriarchs, and giving the Law to the Jews.

8. *That God, after the Flood, made particular Revelations of himself and of his Will to the Patriarchs; is a Thing very credible in it self, for the same reasons that I have before shown in general, that the Expectation of some Revelation from God, was a reasonable and probable Expectation. And that, after this, God should vouchsafe by Express Revelation to give a Law to the whole Nation of the Jews; consisting very much in Sacrifices, and in external rites and ceremonious observances; cannot with any just reason be rejected as an incredible Fact; if we consider, that such a kind of Institution was necessary in those Times and Circumstances, to preserve that Nation from the Idolatry and Worship of false Gods, wherewith the Countries around them were overspread; that those rites and ceremonies were typical of, and preparative to, a higher and more excellent Dispensation;*

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that the Jews were continually told by their Prophets, that their observance of those rites and ceremonies was by no means so highly acceptable to God, nor so absolutely and indispensably insisted upon by him, as Obedience to the Moral Law; and that the whole matter of Fact relating to that Revelation, is delivered down to us in a History, on which the Polity of a whole Nation was founded, at a time when no Body could be ignorant of the truth of the principal Facts, and concerning which we can now have no more reason to doubt, than of any History of any antient matter of Fact in the World. The most considerable and real difficulty, viz. why this Favour was granted to that single Nation only, and not to all the rest of the World likewise; is to be accounted for by the same reasons, which prove (as pag. 215) has been before shown) that God was not obliged to make known the Revelation of the Gospel, to all Men alike.

9. That all the other particulars of *of the o-* Scripture-history contained in the Old *ther parti-* Testament, are true Relations of Mat- *culars of* ter of Fact; (not to insist now on *Scripture-* the many Arguments which prove *History in* the Old *Testament* in general the Antiquity, Genuineness, and Authority of the Books themselves;) will to a rational Inquirer appear

† lib. 1.
c. 16. and
lib. 3. c.
16. where
see the Ci-
tations at
large.

pear very credible from hence; that very many of the particular Histories, and some even of the minuter Circumstances also of those Histories, are confirmed by concurrent Testimonies of profane and unquestionably unprejudiced Authors. Of which *Grotius*, in his excellent Book of † the *Truth of the Christian Religion*, has given us a large Collection. As particularly; that the manner of the *Formation of the Earth* out of a *Chaos*, is mentioned by the Antientest *Phœnician*, *Ægyptian*, *Indian* and *Greek* Historians; the very Names of *Adam* and *Eve*, by *Sanchuniathon* and others; the longevity of the *Antediluvians*, by *Berosus* and *Manethos* and others; the *Ark of Noah*, by *Berosus*; many particulars of the *Flood*, by *Ovid* and others; the *Family of Noah*, and two of every kind of *Animals* entering into the *Ark* with him, mentioned by *Lucian* himself, as a Tradition of the Antient *Græcians*; The *Dove* which *Noah* sent out of the *Ark*, by *Abyde-*

* Διὸς ἑλίου ὁσὶ ἀν-
θρώπων ἐκ τῆς λαοκρα-
τίας, χειμῶν ὅτι ἐστὶν
πάλιν ἐνδομένῳ, ἐνδίας
δ' ἀποστῆσαν. *Plutarch*:
*utrum Terrestria an Aqua-
tica animantia plus habe-
ant solertia.*

nus and * *Plutarch*; the building of *Babel*, by *Abydenus*; the burning of *Sodom*, by *Diodorus Siculus* and *Strabo* and *Tacitus* and others; several particulars of the History of *Abraham* and the rest of the *Patriarchs*, by *Be-*

rosus

profus and others; many particulars of Moses's Life, by several antient Writers; the eminent Piety of the most antient Jews, by Strabo and Justin; divers Actions of David and Solomon, in the Phœnician Annals; some of the Actions of Elijah, by Menander, and confessed by Julian himself; the History of Jonab, under the Name of Hercules, by Lycobron and Aeneas Gazeus; and the Histories of the following times, by many more Authors. Besides that

as † learned Men have upon exceeding probable grounds supposed, many of the most antient Scripture-histories are acknowledged and asserted in the Writings of the Poets, both Greeks and Latins; the true Histories being couched under fictitious Names and fabulous Representa-

† See Stil-
lingfleet's
Origin. sa-
cræ, lib. 3.
cap. 5. And
Bocharti
Phalæg, &c
Vossii de
Idolola-
tria.

10. That God, in the fulness of time; that is, at that time which infinite Wisdom had fore-appointed, which all the Ancient Prophecies had determined, and which many concurrent Circumstances in the state of the Jewish Religion, and in the disposition of the Roman Empire, made a fit Season for the reception and propagation of a new Institution of Religion: that God (I say) at That Time, should send his only begotten Son, That Word or Wis-

Of God's
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dom of the Father, That Divine Person by whom (as has been before shown) He created the World, and by whom he made all former particular Manifestations of himself unto Men; that he should send him, to take upon him our humane Nature, and therein to make a full and particular Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind, who by Sin had corrupted themselves and forfeited the Favour of God, so that by the bare Light of Nature they could not discover any certain means by which they could be satisfactorily and absolutely secure of regaining that Favour; To preach unto Men Repentance and Remission of Sin, and, by giving himself a Sacrifice and Expiation for Sin, to declare the Acceptableness of Repentance, and the Certainty of Pardon thereupon, in a Method evidently consistent with all necessary Vindication of the Honour and Authority of the Divine Laws, and with Gods irreconcilable Hatred against Sin; To be a Mediatour and Intercessour, between God and Man; To procure the particular Assistance of Gods Holy Spirit, which might be in Men a new and effectual principle of Heavenly and Divine Life: In a word, To be the Saviour and Judge of Mankind, and finally to bring them to Eternal Life: All this, when clearly

ly and expressly revealed, and by good Testimony proved to be so revealed; is apparently agreeable and very credible to right and true Reason. As (because it is the main and fundamental Article of the Christian Faith,) I shall endeavour to make out more largely and distinctly; by showing in particular, that none of the several Objections, upon which *Speculative* Unbelievers reject this Doctrine, do at all prove any inconsistency in the belief of it, with sound and unprejudiced Reason.

For, *First*, it cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed in the general, that God should make a *Revelation of his Will* to Mankind; since on the contrary, (as has been before proved at large,) it is very agreeable to the Moral Attributes of God, and to the Notions and Expectations of the wisest and most rational Men that lived in the Heathen World.

That it is not unreasonable to suppose God making a Revelation of his Will to Men.

Secondly, It cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed, that in such a Revelation, wherein God freely proclaims Remission of Sin, and the Acceptableness of Repentance, he should nevertheless have appointed such a *Sacrifice or Expiation for Sin*, as might at the same time be a sufficient Testimony of his irreconcilable hatred against it. For though, by

That it is not unreasonable to believe, that God would appoint a Sacrifice or Expiation for Sin.

the Light of Nature, it was indeed exceeding probable and to be hoped for, that God would forgive Sin upon true Repentance; yet it could not be proved, that he was absolutely obliged to do so, or that he would certainly do so: On the contrary, there was reason to suppose, that, in Vindication of the Honour and Dignity of his Laws, he would require some further Satisfaction and Expiation. And accordingly we find the Custom of *Sacrificing*, to have prevailed universally over the Heathen World in all Ages; Which, how unreasonable soever an Expectation it was, to think that the Blood of Beasts could truly expiate Sin, yet thus much it plainly and undeniably shows, that it has been the common Apprehension of Mankind in all Ages, that God would not be appeased nor pardon Sin without some Punishment and Satisfaction; and yet at the same Time they had good Hopes, that upon the Repentance of Sinners, God would accept some other Satisfaction instead of the Destruction of the Offenders. 'Tis therefore plainly agreeable to right Reason, to believe that God, in Vindication of the Honour of his Laws, and for a Testimony of his Hatred against Sin, should appoint some Sacrifice or Expiation for Sin, at the same

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time that he forgives the Sinner upon his true Repentance.

Thirdly, It cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed, that a Mediatour or Intercessour should be appointed between God and Man, through and by whom the Prayers of Sinners may be offered up so as to be acceptable in the Sight of God. 'Tis well known, the generality of the wisest Heathens thought it agreeable to Reason, to make use of Subordinate Intelligences, Dæmons or Heroes, by whom they put up their Prayers to the Superiour Gods; hoping that by the Mediation of those Intercessours, the unworthiness of their own Persons, and the defects of these Prayers might be supplied; and they might obtain such merciful and gracious Answers to their Prayers, as they could not presume to hope for upon their own Account. Wherein though those Pagans laboured indeed under very great Uncertainty, in doing a thing for which they had no sufficient Warrant, and in using Mediatours whom they neither knew distinctly to have any Being, nor could they however have any good Security that such Mediation would be acceptable to the Supreme God; Yet at the same time this undeniably proves, that it is by no means inconsistent with right Reason, to be-

That it is not unreasonable to believe, that a Mediator should be appointed between God and Man.

lieve that a Mediator may by Divine Authority be appointed between God and sinful Men, to be their Intercessor and Advocate with a justly offended God.

Of the Objection drawn from the Dignity of the Person whom we believe to be our Mediatour and Redeemer.

Fourthly, The greatest real Difficulty in this Matter, to the Judgment of right Reason, seems to arise from the consideration of the *Dignity of the Person*, whom we believe to have given himself a Sacrifice and Propitiation for the Sins of Mankind; viz. how it is possible, that the *Only begotten Son of God* should be *Incaruate* and become *Man*; how it is conceivable that *God* should *condescend* so far as to *send*, and the *Son of God* condescend willingly to be *sent*, and do such great things for his Creatures; and above all, how it is consistent with Reason, to suppose God condescending to do so much for such *frail* and *weak* Creatures as Men, who, in all appearance, seem to be but a very small, low, and inconsiderable part of the Creation. And here indeed it must readily be acknowledged, that humane Reason could never have discovered such a Method as this, for the reconciliation of Sinners to an offended God, without express Revelation. But then neither on the other Side, when once this method is made known, is there any such Difficulty or Inconceivableness in it, as can reasonably make

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a wise and considerate Man call in question the truth of a well-attested Revelation, merely upon that account; Which indeed, any plain Absurdity or Contradiction in the Matter of a Doctrine pretended to be revealed, would, it must be confessed, unavoidably do. For as to the Possibility of the Incarnation of the Son of God; whatever mysteriousness there confessedly was in the Manner of it, yet, as to the thing it self, there is evidently no more unreasonableness in believing the possibility of it, than in believing the Union of the Soul and Body, or any other certain Truth which we plainly see implies no contradiction in the thing it self, at the same time that we are sensible we cannot discover the manner how it is effected. Again; As to the incredibility of the Doctrine, that God should make so great a Condescension to his Creatures; and that a Person of such Dignity, as the Only-begotten Son of God, should vouchsafe to give himself a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men: He that duly considers, how it is no diminution to the glory and greatness of the Creator of all things, to inspect, govern, and direct every thing by his All-wise Providence through the whole Creation; to take care even of the meanest of his Creatures, so that not

a Sparrow falls to the ground or a hair of our head perishes without his knowledge; and to observe exactly every particle even of inanimate Matter in the Universe: he (I say) who duly considers This, cannot with Reason think it any real Disparagement to the Son of God, (though it was indeed a most wonderful and amazing Instance of Humility and Condescension,) that he should concern himself so far for sinful Men, as to appear in their Nature to reveal the Will of God more clearly to them, to give himself a Sacrifice and Expiation for their Sins, and to bring them to Repentance and Eternal Life. The greatest Enemies and Deriders of Christianity, have asserted things, *far more* incredible; to have been done upon *far less* occasions: Witness what Ju-

* ὁ ὅς ἐστις ἐξ ἐαυτοῦ
 * Ἀσκληπιὸν ἐγένετο
 ἢ πῶς γὰρ διὰ τῆς
 ἡλίας γονίμης ζωῆς ἐέρ-
 νεν· ἔτι ἐπὶ γῆς ἐξ
 ἑαυτοῦ πινόμενος πρό-
 δ' ἐν ἐροειδῶς αὐτὸ πρὸς
 ἑαυτὸν ἐφάνη. Julian.

lian the Apostate * thought fit to believe concerning *Æsculapius's* coming down from Heaven, and conversing upon Earth in a visible Form, only to teach Men the Art of healing Diseases. And

Modern Unbelievers, who seem willing in the contrary extreme, to deny God's having any regard, or taking any care in any respect, for the Welfare and Happiness of his Creatures; are forced, if they will go about to give any account or explication of things,

things, to invent much more incredible Hypotheses, dishonourable to God, and utterly inconsistent with his Divine Attributes. Indeed, if we will consider things impartially, so far is it from being truly any diminution of the greatness and glory of God, to send his *Son* into the World for the Redemption and Salvation of Mankind; that, on the contrary; it is a means of bringing the very greatest Honour to the Laws and Government of God, that can be imagined. For what can be imagined more honourable, and worthy of the Supreme Lord and Governour of all things; than to show forth his mercy and Goodness, in forgiving the Sins of frail and fallible Creatures, and suffering himself to be reconciled to them upon their true Repentance; and yet at the same time to cause such an Expiation to be made for Sin, by the sufferings and Death of his own Son in their Nature, as might be an abundant Evidence of his irreconcilable Hatred against Sin, a just Vindication of the Authority and Dignity of his Laws, and a sufficient and effectual warning to deter Men from Sin, to create in them the greatest dread and detestation of it, and for ever to terrify them from venturing upon wilful transgression and disobedience.

disobedience? 'Tis true, no Man can pretend certainly to say, but God by his absolute Sovereignty and Authority, might, if he had so pleased, have pardoned Sin upon Repentance, without any Sacrifice or Expiation at all; But this Method of doing it by the Death of Christ, is more wise and fit, and evidently more proper and effectual to discourage and prevent presumption, to discourage Men from repeating their Transgressions, to give them a deep Sense of the heinous Nature of Sin, and to convince them of the excellency and importance of the Laws of God, and the indispensable Necessity of paying Obedience to them; Forasmuch as it shows us, that at the same time that God was willing to save the Sinner, yet, least encouragement should be given to Sin by letting it go unpunished, he did not think fit to forgive the Transgressions of Men without great Sufferings in our Nature, and to do away the guilt of our Sins but upon such difficult Terms as the Death of his own Son. So that in this Dispensation, Justice and Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other. And by how much the greater the Dignity of the Person was, who gave himself thus a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men:

of so much the greater Weight and Force is this Argument to deter Men for the future from Sin, and to convince them of the Necessity of Obedience. Wherefore so far is it from being true, that the consideration of the Dignity of the Person suffering, is a real Objection against the credibility of the Doctrine; that on the contrary, that very consideration contains the highest Vindication imaginable, of the Greatness and Honour and Authority of the Laws of God; and at the same Time, the greatest possible Instance or Expression of his Mercy and Compassion towards Men, agreeable to our Natural Notions of his Divine Attributes. And then, as to the *last* part of this Difficulty, *viz.* how it can be consistent with Reason, to suppose God condescending to do so very great Things for such *mean and weak* Creatures, as Men are; who, in all appearance, seem to be but a very *small, low and inconsiderable* part of the Creation; forasmuch as the whole Earth it self, is but a little spot that bears no proportion at all to the Universe; and in all probability of Reason, the large and numberless Orbs of Heaven cannot but be supposed to be filled with Beings more capable, than we, to show forth the praise and glory of their

their Almighty Creator, and more worthy to be the Objects of his Care and Love: To this part of the Difficulty, I say, the Answer is very easy; *That* the Mercy and Love of the infinitely good God, is extended equally over all his Works; *That*, let the Universe be supposed as large, and the rational Creatures, with which it is furnished, as many and excellent, as any one can imagine; yet Mankind is plainly the chief, indeed the only Inhabitant, for whose sake 'tis evident this our Globe of Earth was formed into a habitable World; and this our Earth is, as far as we have any means of judging, as considerable and worthy of the Divine Care, as most other Parts of the System; and this our System, as considerable, as any other single System in the Universe: And finally, *That* in like manner as the same Divine Providence, which presides over the whole Creation, does particularly govern and direct every thing in this our lower World, as well as in every other particular part of the Universe; so there is no real Difficulty to right Reason, in conceiving that the same Divine *Logos*, the *Word* or *Messenger* of the Father, who in various Dispensations, according to the particular needs and exigencies of Mankind,

kind, has made various Manifestations of God, and Discoveries of the Divine Will, to us here upon Earth; may also, for ought we know, have to other Beings, in other parts of the Universe, according to their several capacities or wants, made different Manifestations of God and Discoveries of his Will, in ways of which we can know nothing, and in which we have no Concern: There being nothing in this, at all contrary to the Nature of God, or the Condition of things.

Fifthly and *Lastly*, If any one of the Ob-
 thinks it unreasonable to be believed, ^{jection}
 that God should send his Son into ^{drawn}
 the World for the Redemption of ^{from the}
 Mankind; and yet that this appea- ^{Christian}
 rance of the Son of God upon Earth, ^{Revelation}
 should not be till the *latter Ages* of ^{not being in}
 the World; and after he has appea- ^{fast Uni-}
 red, yet his appearance not be made ^{versal.}
 known equally to *all Nations*: Such
 a one * must likewise for the same * *See be-*
 Reason affirm, that 'tis unreasonable ^{fore, pag.}
 to believe the Necessity and Obliga- ^{215.}
 tions even of Natural Religion it self,
 because 'tis plain all Men are not
 furnished equally with the same Ca-
 pacities and Opportunities of under-
 standing those Obligations; And con-
 sequently no Deist can, consistently
 with his own Principles, make *This*
Objection against the Truth of Chri-
 stianity.

stianity. He must likewise for the same Reason affirm, that God is obliged in all other respects also to make all his Creatures equal; to make Men, Angels; to endue All Men with the same Faculties and Capacities, as Any; at least, to make all Men capable of the very same *Kind*, and the same *Degree* of Happiness, and to afford to All of them all the very same means or opportunities of obtaining it: In a word, he must assert, that infinite Wisdom cannot reasonably be supposed to have a Right of making variety of Creatures in very various Circumstances: Which is an Assertion palpably most absurd, in Experience false, and a very unjust diminution of Gods Sovereignty in the World. But besides: Though the Redemption purchased by the Son of God, is not indeed actually made known unto All Men; yet as no Man ever denied, but that the Benefit of the Death of Christ extended backwards to those who lived *before* his appearance in the World; so no Man can prove, but that the same Benefit may likewise extend it self forwards to those who never heard of his appearance, tho' they lived after it.

Of the other particulars of Scripture-history contained in

II. That the *History of the Life of Christ*, contained in the *New Testament*, is a *true Relation of Matters of Fact*, (not to insist here on the Testimony

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mony of his Disciples and Followers, ^{the New Testament} which shall be considered hereafter in its proper place;) will to a rational Inquirer appear very credible from hence; that very many particulars of that History, are confirmed by concurrent Testimonies of profane and unquestionably unprejudiced Authors. That, before the coming of our Saviour, there was a general Expectation spread over all the Eastern Nations, that out of *Judæa* should arise a Person, who should be Governour of the World; is expressly affirmed by the Roman Historians, * *Suetonius* and † *Tacitus*. That there lived in *Judæa*, at the time which the Gospel relates, such a person as *Jesus of Nazareth*; is acknowledged by all Authors, both Jewish and Pagan, who have written since that Time. The *Star* that appeared at his Birth, and the Journey of Wise Men, is mentioned by * *Cbalcidius* the Platonist. *Herods* causing all the Children in *Bethlehem* under two Years old to be slain, and a Reflexion made upon him on that occasion by the Emperour

* *Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus & constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Sueton.*

† *Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis Sacerdotum libris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Tacit. lib. 21.*

the Chaldean

* See the Place cited by *Grotius* de *Veritate Christianæ Religionis*, lib. 3. c. 14.

† Cum audisset [*Augustus*,] inter pueros quos in Syria *Herodes Rex Judæorum intra bimatum* iussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum; ait, *Melius est Herodis porcum esse quam filium*. *Macrob.* lib. 2. cap. 4. [A Testimony so very remarkable and pertinent, that 'tis strange how *Grotius* could omit to mention it in the place now cited.]

* See the places cited by *Grotius*, de *Veritate Christi*. *Rel.* lib. 2. cap. 5.

Emperour *Augustus*, is related by † *Macrobius*. Many of the *Miracles* that *Jesus* worked in his Lifetime, are, as to matters of Fact; (particularly his healing the Lame and the Blind, and casting out Devils;) expressly owned by the most implacable Enemies of Christianity, by * *Celsus* and *Julian*, and the Authors of the *Jewish Talmud*. And how the Power of the

Heathen Gods ceased after the coming of Christ, is acknowledged by || *Ibid.* || *Porphyrus*, who attributes it to their being Angry at the setting up of the Christian Religion which he stiles impious and profane. Many particulars of the collateral History, concerning *John Baptist*, and *Herod* and *Pilate*, (not to mention the famous Testimony concerning *Jesus* himself, because it is by Some suspected not to be genuine, notwithstanding it is found in all the ancient Copies;) are largely recorded by *Josephus*. The Crucifixion of Christ under *Pontius Pilate*, is related by †

† *Tiberio* imperitante, per procuratorem *Pontium Pilatum*, supplicio affectus erat. lib. 15.

† *Tacitus*: And diverse of the most remarkable Circumstances attending it, such as the *Earthquake* and miraculous *Darkness*, were recorded

ed in the * publick Ro-
man Registers, common-
ly appealed to by the
first Christian Writers as
what could not be de-
nied by the Adversaries themselves;
and are in a very particular manner
attested by || Phlegon.

Then, as to the Resurrecti-
on and Ascension of
Christ; these depend on
the general Proofs of the
credibility of his Disci-
ples Testimony, and o-
ther following Evidences;
which will be considered
hereafter in their proper
place.

* Eum mundi casum
relatum in Arcanis ve-
stris habetis. Tertullian.
Apol.

|| Περὶ δὲ τῆ ἐπὶ Τιβε-
ρίῳ καί τῳ ἐκλείψειν,
δὲ κατακλυσθῆναι καὶ Ἰου-
δαίαν εἰσὶν ἐς αὐτῶν δαί. καὶ
περὶ τῶν μεγάλων τότε γε-
νομένων σεισμῶν τῆ γῆς, ἀ-
νέγραψε καὶ Φλέγων. Ori-
gen. adv. Cels. lib. 2.

Τετάρτῳ δὲ ἔτι τῆς
διακοσιοστῆς δευτέρας Ὁ-
λυμπιάδῃ ἐγένετο ἑκα-
ταίσι ἡλίῳ, μεγίστη τῶν
ἐγνωσμένων σφοδρότερον καὶ
νύξ ὥρα ἔκτε τῆς ἡμέ-
ρας ἐγένετο, ὥστε καὶ ἀστέρας ἐν ἑραν φανῆναι καὶ σεισμὸς, &c.

Phlegon.

12. That God has appointed a Day, of the Day
wherein he will judge the world in of Judg-
Righteousness, by That Person whom he ment, and
has ordained, in order to reward Christ the
Judge.
every Man according to his Works;
as a Doctrine perfectly agreeable to
Right Reason, and to our Natural
Notions of the Attributes of God;
as may appear more particularly from
what has been before said concern-
ing the Necessity and Certainty of
another Life after this; and is evi-
dent

dent from the Opinion of all the wiser Heathens concerning this Matter. Neither may it perhaps be altogether impertinent to observe here, that the Poets both Greek and Latin have unanimously agreed in this one particular Circumstance, that Men after Death should not have Judgment passed upon them immediately by God himself, but by *just Men* appointed for that purpose.

Of the Resurrection of the Body.

13. That in order to this final Judgment, not only the Soul shall survive the Dissolution of the Body, but the *Body it self* also shall be raised again; This Doctrine, though not indeed discoverable with any kind of certainty by the bare Light of Nature; because the belief of the Soul's Immortality (for ought that appears to Reason alone) is sufficient to answer all the purposes of a Future State, as far as is discoverable merely by the Light of Nature; Yet this Doctrine (I say) of the *Resurrection of the Body*, when made known by Revelation, evidently contains nothing in it in the least contrary to right Reason. For what reasonable Man can deny, but that it is plainly altogether as easy for God to raise the Body again after Death, as to create and form it at first? Some of the

* Δῆλον ὡς ἔδεν ἀδύνατον καὶ ἡμᾶς μετὰ τὸ τελευτῆσαι, πάντα πάλιν

Stoical Philosophers seem to have thought it not only

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only possible, but even probable: And many of the Jews, who had no express Revelation concerning it, did yet believe

δὲν τινῶν ἐκλυμένων χερ-
νι, εἰς ὃ νῦν ἔσμεν ἀπὸ
κατασθέντων χημάτων. Chry-
sippus citat. a Lactant.
lib. 7.

it upon an ancient Tradition; as appears from all their Writings, and particularly from the Translation of the last Verse of the Book of Job, which according to the Seventy runs thus; So Job, died, being old and full of Days; but † 'tis writ-

ten that he shall rise again with those whom the Lord raises up. The only real

† Γέγραπται ὅτι ἀπὸ τοῦ
πάλιν ἀναστήσεται, μεθ'
ὧν ὁ Κύριος ἀνίστησι. Job
42. ult.

difficulty in this Doctrine,

seems to arise upon putting the Supposition of one Body's being turned into the Nourishment, and becoming part of the Substance of another; so as that the same parts may equally belong to two Body's, to both of which it shall nevertheless be absolutely impossible that the same parts should be restored. But this Objection, as great and principal a Difficulty as it is, is really but a great Trifle. For there does not at all appear any absolute Necessity, that, to constitute the same Body, there must be an exact restitution of all and only the same Parts. And if there

was any such Necessity; yet even still, without making that hard Supposition (which * Grotius and others

* De Veritate Rel.
Chr. lib.
2. c. 10.

have done) that God by a miraculous Providence always interposes to prevent the Parts of one humane Body from incorporating with and becoming the Nourishment of another; (for I cannot see any sufficient Ground to deny, but that it may be possible in Nature, for barbarous *Cannibals*, if any such there be, to subsist for some time and live wholly one upon another, if deprived of all other sustenance.) Without any such hard Suppositions as these (I say,) it is easy to imagine many ways, by which the Resurrection of the same Body, properly speaking, shall nevertheless be very possible; and the whole Foundation of this, and all other Difficulties of this kind, concerning the Parts and Forms and Magnitudes and Proportions of our future Bodies, be entirely taken away.

*Of the Resurrection
of the same
Body.*

As, *First*; No Man can say it is improbable, (and they who have been most and best versed in Microscopical Observations, think it more than probable,) that the *original Stamina*, which contain all and every one of the solid parts and vessels of the Body, not excepting even the minutest nerves and fibres, are themselves the *entire Body*; and that all the *extraneous Matter*, which, coming in by way of Nourishment, fills up and extends the minute and insensible Vessels, of which

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which all the visible and sensible Vessels are composed, is not strictly and properly *Part* of the Body. Consequently, while all this *extraneous Matter*, which serves only to swell the Body to its just magnitude, is in *continual Flux*, the *original Stamina* may continue *unchanged*; and so, no Confusion of Bodies will be possible in Nature. There may be made many very considerable Observations, concerning the *determinate Figure* into which every respective Body unfolds it self by Growth; concerning the Impossibility of the Body's extending it self by any Nourishment whatsoever beyond *that certain Magnitude*, to which the original Vessels are capable of being unfolded; and concerning the Impossibility of restoring by any Nourishment any the smallest vessel or solid part of the Body, that has at any time happened to be mutilated by any Accident: All which Observations, often and carefully made, will seem very much to favour some such Speculation as This.

Secondly: It may also be supposed otherwise, not without good probability, that *in like manner as in every Grain of Corn there is contained a minute insensible seminal Principle, which is it self the en-

* Ἡμῶς μὲν ἔν τῳ ὅλῳ
μὲν τὸ διαρραγεῖν σῶμα
ἐπὶ πλείονας οὐκ ἔστιν ἔξ ὅ-
χης φύσιν, ὡς ἔδῃ τὸν δι-
αρραγεῖντα κόκκον τὸ σί-
τε λέγομεν ἰδὲ ὡς περὶ ἐπὶ
τῷ κόκκῳ τὸ σίτε ἐν αὐτῷ
ταῖς ἐστέρας, ἔτω λόγος

ἡ ἑλκεῖται τὸ σῶμα,
 καὶ ὁ μὴ φθαρμένος ἐγεί-
 ρεται τὸ σῶμα ἐν ἀφθαρ-
 σίᾳ. Origen. advers. Cels.
 lib. 5.

tire future blade and ear,
 and, in due Season, when
 all the rest of the Grain
 is corrupted, evolves and
 unfolds it self visibly in-

to that Form; so our present mortal
 and corruptible Body may be but the
Exuvia, as it were, of some hidden
 and at present insensible Principle,
 (possibly the present Seat of the Soul,)
 which at the Resurrection shall dis-
 cover it self in its proper Form.
 This way also, there can be no Con-
 fusion of Bodies, possible in Nature.
 And it is not without some Weight,
 that the Antientest Writers of the Church
 have always made use of this very
 Similitude; that the Apostle St Paul
 himself, alleges the same Comparison;
 and that the Jewish Writers seem to
 have had some obscure glimpse of this
 Notion, when they talked of a cer-
 tain *incorruptible* part of the Body;
 Though these latter indeed, explained
 themselves very weakly and unphiloso-
 phically.

Many other ways perhaps may
 be imagined, by which the same
 thing may be explained intelligibly.
 But these Speculations are nice and
 subtle, and neither needful nor pro-
 per to be enlarged upon in this
 place. Only the bare mention of
 them, shows the manifold *possibili-
 ty* of the Doctrine of the Resur-
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rection; against the Objections of those who would have it seem contradictory.

14. Lastly; That after the Resurrection and the general Judgment, wherein every Man shall be judged according to his Works; they that have done well, shall go into everlasting Happiness; and they that have done evil, into everlasting Punishment: is a Doctrine in it self very credible, and reasonable to be believed. Concerning the everlasting Happiness of the Righteous, there is no dispute; it being evident that God in his infinite Bounty may reward the sincere Obedience of his Creatures, as much beyond the merit of their own weak and imperfect Works, as he himself pleases. But the everlasting Punishment threatned to the Wicked, has seem'd to Many a great difficulty; since it is certain from our Natural Notions of the Attributes of God, that no Man shall be punished beyond the just demerit of his Sins. Here therefore it is to be observed; first, that no Man can say it is unreasonable, that they who by wilful and stubborn Disobedience to their Almighty Creatour and most merciful Benefactor, and by the habitual Practise of unrepented Wickedness, have, during this state

Of the eternal Happiness of the Blessed, and the eternal Punishment of the Damned.

of Trial, made themselves unfit for the enjoyment of that Happiness which God has prepared for them that love and obey him; should be eternally rejected, and excluded from it. Thus much, the wickedest of Men are willing enough to believe. And if bare *Deprivation of Happiness* was all the Punishment they had reason to fear, they would be well content to sit still in their Wickedness. But is it at all agreeable to Reason to believe, that the Punishment to be inflicted by the final Wrath of a provoked God upon his most obstinate and incorrigible Enemies, should be merely such a thing as is in its own Nature less dreadful and terrible, than even those Afflictions which by certain Experience we see in this present Life fall sometimes upon such Persons with whom God is not angry at all? Is it agreeable to reason to believe, that God, who, as is evident by experience, suffers the very best of his own Servants, for the Punishment of their Sins, or even only for the Tryal of their Virtue, to fall sometimes under all the Calamities and Miseries, which 'tis possible for the cruellest and most powerful Tyrants to invent and execute; should punish his most obstinately rebellious and finally impenitent Creatures, with nothing more than

the *Negation of Happiness*? There must therefore in the *next* place be some *sensible and positive Punishment*, besides the mere negative Loss of Happiness. And whoever seriously considers the dreadful Effects of God's Anger in this present World, in the Instance of the general *Deluge*, the overthrow of *Sodom and Gomorrha*, the amazing Calamities which befell the whole *Jewish Nation* at the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and other such like Examples; in some of which Cases, the Judgments have fallen upon mixt multitudes of good Men and bad together; (not to mention the Calamities which sometimes befall even good Men by themselves:) Whosoever, I say, seriously considers all this, cannot but frame to himself very terrible apprehensions of the *Greatness* of that Punishment, which the despised Patience of God shall finally inflict on the impenitently wicked and incorrigible, when they shall be separated and be by themselves. And then, as to the *Duration* of this Punishment; no Man can presume in our present State of Ignorance and Darkness to be able truly to judge, barely by the strength of his own natural Reason, what in *this Respect* is or is not consistent with the Wisdom and Justice and Goodness of the Supreme Governour
of

of the World; since we neither know the *Place*, nor *Kind*, nor *Manner*, nor *Circumstances*, nor *Degrees*, nor *All the Ends and Uses* of the final Punishment of the Wicked: Only this one thing we are certain of, that the Justice of God will abundantly vindicate it self, and all Mouths shall be stopped before him, and be forced to acknowledge the exact Righteousness of all his Judgments, and to condemn their own Folly and Wickedness; forasmuch as the *Degrees* or *Intenseness* of the Punishment which shall be inflicted on the Impenitent, shall be exactly proportionate to their Sins, as a recompense of their demerit, so that no Man shall suffer more than he has deserved. This being once clearly established; the Difficulty about the *Duration* of the Punishment, will not appear so insuperable to right Reason. For nothing can be more evident, than that God may justly banish the Wicked *eternally* from his Kingdom of Glory, and from that Happiness which is his Free and undeserved Gift to the Righteous: And the *positive* punishment which shall be inflicted upon them in that State of Eternal Rejection, shall undoubtedly be such and so proportionated to Mens deserts, as the Righteous

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Judge will then make appear before Rev. 14.
Men and Angels, to be just and wise 10. Shall
and necessary, and such only as becomes be torment-
the infinitely Wise and Good Lord and ed with
Governour of the Universe to inflict. Fire and
The Wisest of the Heathen Philosophers, Brimstone,
without the help of Revelation, have in the pre-
sence of the
taught, and did believe it agreeable to Holy An-
gels, and
right Reason, that * the in the pre-
sence of
Punishment of the in- the Lamb.
corrigible should be [*αἰώ-
νιος*] without any deter-
minate or known End.
And We cannot tell how
many Wise Designs God
may serve thereby. We
know not but that, as God
has now discovered to Us
in some measure the Fall
and Punishment of evil
Angels, to be a warning to
Us; so he may hereafter
use the Example of the
Punishment of Wicked and
incorrigible Men, to be a means of pre-
serving other Beings in their Obedi-
ence. And many other Considerati-
ons there may possibly be, very ne-
cessary to enable us to judge rightly
concerning this Matter; which, in
this present State, we have no suffi-
cient means of coming to the Know-
ledge of.

Thus all the *Credenda*, or *Doctrines*,
which the Christian Religion teaches;
(that

* *Οἱ δ' ἂν δόξωσιν
ἀνιάτως ἔχειν διὰ τὰ
μεγέθη τῶν ἀμαρτημα-
των, τέτυκται ἡ περὶ κρυ-
πτὰ μοῖρα ῥίπτει εἰς τὸν
Τάρταρον, ὃθεν ὑποτῆ
ἐκβαίνετι. Plato in Phaed.*

*Ὡς περὶ τὴν κολάσιν αἰώ-
νιος νομίζεις, ἔγωγε καὶ οἱ
τῶν ἱερῶν ἐκείνων ἐξη-
γῆται τελευταί τε καὶ μυ-
σαζομεθαί. Cels. apud Ori-
gen. lib. 8.*

*Οἱ δ' ἄδικοι πάντων
αἰώνιους κακοῖς σπώζον-
ται. Id. ibid.*

(that is, not only those *plain* Doctrines which it requires to be believed as fundamental and of necessity to eternal Salvation, but even *All* the Doctrines which it teaches as Matters of Truth;) are in the *First* place, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare Reason unassisted with Revelation, yet, when discovered by Revelation, apparently most

† agreeable to sound and unprejudiced Reason.

† Ταῦτ' ἡς πίστης ἡμῶν, καὶ κοινὰς ἐννοίας ἀρχὴν συνιστά. Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 3.

Every one of them has a direct Tendency and powerful Influence to reform Mens Manners.

‡ Arch Bp. of York's Sermon before the Queen on Christ-mass Day. 1704.

In the next place, Every one of these Doctrines, has a natural Tendency, and a direct and powerful Influence, to reform Mens Lives, and correct their Manners. This is the Great End, and ultimate Design, of all true Religion; and 'tis a very great and fatal Mistake, to think that any Doctrine or any Belief whatsoever, can be any otherwise of any Benefit to Men, than as it is fitted to promote this main End. There was none of the Doctrines of our Saviour, (as an * excellent Prelate of our Church admirably expresses this matter) calculated for the gratification of Mens idle Curiosities, the busying and amusing them with airy and useless Speculations; Much less were they intended for an Exercise of our Credulity, or a Tryal how far we could bring our Reason

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Reason to submit to our Faith: But, as on the one hand they were plain and simple, and such as by their agreeableness to the rational Faculties of Mankind, did highly recommend themselves to our Belief; so on the other hand they had an immediate relation to Practice, and were the genuine Principles and Foundation upon which all humane and divine Virtues were naturally to be superstructed. Particularly; What can be a more necessary and excellent Foundation of true Religion, than That Doctrine which the Christian Religion clearly and distinctly teaches us, concerning the Nature and Attributes of the *One only true God*; without any of that Ambiguity and Doubtfulness, those various and inconsistent Opinions and Conjectures, those uncertain and oft-times false Reasonings concerning the Nature of God, which, notwithstanding the natural possibility of discovering very many of the Attributes of God by the Light of true Reason, did yet in Fact overspread the greatest part of the Heathen World with Polytheism or Atheism? What can be so certain a Preservative against Idolatry, and the Worship of false Gods; as the Doctrine, that the *Universe, the Heavens and the Earth, and all things contained therein, are the Creatures and Workmanship of the One true God, and have a continual dependence upon him for the Preservation of their Being?*

Being? What can be so sure a Ground of true Piety and Reliance upon God, as the clear Christian Doctrine concerning *Providence*, concerning God's perpetually governing and directing the issues and events of all things, and inspecting with a more especial regard the moral Actions of Men? which Doctrine was perplexed by the Philosophers with endless Disputes. What can be so just a Vindication of the Goodness of God, and consequently so necessary in order to our maintaining in our Minds worthy and honourable Notions concerning him; as the Doctrine, that *God created Man at first Upright*, and that the *Original of all Evil and Misery is Sin*? the want of a clear Knowledge of which Truth, extremely perplexed the Heathen World, and made Many recur to that most absurd Fiction of a Self-existent *Evil Principle*. What can be a more proper Motive to Piety, than the Doctrine that *the Deluge* and other Remarkable Calamities which have befallen Mankind, were sent upon them by God's immediate Direction, as *Punishments* for their Wickedness? What can be a greater encouragement to the Practise of Holiness, than the Doctrine, that *God has at several times vouchsafed to make several particular Revelations of his Will to Men*, to instruct and support them more effectually

ally in that Practise? But above all;
 What Doctrine could ever have been
 imagined so admirably fitted in all
 respects to promote all the Ends of
 true Religion, as that of the *Incar-*
nation of the Son of God? Which way
 could Men have been filled with so
 deep a Sense of the Mercy and Love
 of God towards them, and have been
 instructed in all divine Truths in a
 Method so well accommodated to
 their present infirmities; as by *God's*
sending his Only-begotten Son, to take
 upon him our Nature, and therein to
 make a general Revelation of the Will
 of God to Mankind? How could the
 Honour and Dignity and Authority
 of the Laws of God have been so
 effectually vindicated, and at the same
 time so satisfactory an assurance of
 Pardon upon true Repentance have
 been given unto Men; as by this
 Method, of *the Son of God giving*
himself a Sacrifice and Expiation for
Sin? What could have been a more
 glorious Manifestation of the Mercy
 and Compassion of God, and at the
 same time a more powerful means
 to discountenance Mens Presumption,
 to discourage them from repeating their
 Transgressions, to give them a deep
 Sense of the heinous Nature of Sin,
 and of Gods extreme Hatred and
 utter Irreconcilableness to it, and to
 convince them of the Excellency and
 Impor-

Importance of the Laws of God, and the indispensable Necessity of paying Obedience to them; than this Expedient of *saving Sinners by the Sufferings and Death of the Son of God, and by establishing with them a new and gracious Covenant upon the Merits of that Satisfaction?* How could Men be better encouraged, to begin a religious Life; than by having such a *Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor* for them with God, to obtain pardon of all their Frailties; and by being assured of the *Assistance of the Spirit of God*, to enable them to conquer all their corrupt Affections, and to be in them an effectual Principle of a heavenly and divine Life? In fine; What stronger and more powerful Motives could possibly have been contrived, to perswade Men to live virtuously, and to deterr them from Vice; than the clear Discovery made to us in the Gospel, of *God's having appointed a Day, wherein he will judge the World in Righteousness, every Man according to his Works; and that they who have done well, shall be adjudged to everlasting Happiness; and they that have done evil, to endless Punishment:* of which the Light of Nature afforded Men but obscure Glimpses? And may we not here, upon the whole, appeal now even to our Adversaries themselves, whether in all and every one

of these Doctrines there be not a more powerful, a more effectual method laid down, for the reforming humane Nature, and obliging the whole World to forsake their Sins, and to lead holy and virtuous Lives, than was ever taught before; nay, or than was possible to have been contrived by all the Wit of Mankind? This is the great and highest recommendation of the Christian Doctrine: This is what, to a well-disposed Mind, would well-nigh satisfactorily prove, even without the addition of any external Testimony, that the Revelation of Christianity could not possibly but come from God; Seeing that, not only all its practical Precepts, but even all its *Articles of Belief* also, tend plainly to this one and the same End, to make Men universally amend and reform their Lives; to recover and restore them to their original excellent State, from the Corruption and Misery which had been introduced by Sin; and to establish upon Earth the Practice of everlasting Righteousness, and entire and hearty Obedience to the Will of God: Which would have been the Religion of Men (had they continued Innocent) in Paradise, and now is the Religion of Angels, and for ever will be the Religion of Saints in Heaven. Vain Men may value themselves upon their speculative Know-

ledge, right Opinions, and True and Orthodox Belief, separate from the Practise of Virtue and Righteousness; But, as sure as the Gospel is true, no Belief whatsoever shall finally be of any Advantage to Men, any otherwise than only so far as it corrects their Practise, hinders them from being *Workers of Iniquity*, and makes them like unto God.

Luk. 13. 27.

And All of them Together, make up the most consistent and rational Scheme of Belief in the World.

Lastly, All the Doctrines of the Christian Faith, do Together make up an infinitely more consistent and rational Scheme of Belief, than any that the Wisest of the Ancient Philosophers ever did, or the cunningest of Modern Unbelievers can invent or contrive. This is evident from a summary View of the forementioned Scheme of the Christian Doctrines; wherein every Article has a just dependence on the foregoing ones, and a close connexion with those that follow; And the whole account of the Order and Disposition of Things from the Original to the Consummation of all Things, is one intricate, regular, complete, consistent, and every way a most rational Scheme: Whereas the Wisest of the *Ancient Philosophers*, that is, those of them who hit upon the greatest Number of single Truths, and taught the fewest

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Absurdities; were yet * never able to make out any universal, entire, and coherent System of Doctrines, and Scheme of the Whole State of Things, with any manner of probability: And the cunningest of Modern Deists; (besides that they must needs in their own Way believe some particular Things stranger and in themselves more incredible than any of the fore-mentioned Christian Doctrines;) cannot in the whole, as has been before shewn, frame to themselves any fixt and settled Principles, upon which to argue consistently; but must unavoidably either be perplexed with inextricable Absurdities, or confessedly recur to down-right Atheism. There have indeed even among Christians themselves, been many Differences and Disputes about particular Doctrines: But, (excepting such as have intolerably corrupted the very fundamental Doctrines, and even the main designation; of which there are too many instances in Writers of the Romish Church especially;) these disputes among Christians, have not been, like those among the Philosophers, *de re-um summa*, concerning the whole scheme and System of things, but only concerning particular explications

* *Diversae ac diverse omnia protulerunt, non an- nectentes nec causas re- rum, nec consequentias nec rationes; ut Sum- mam illam, quae continet universa, & compinge- rent & complerent. La- fant. lib. 7.*

of particular Doctrines; which kind of disputes do not at all * affect the Certainty of the whole Religion it self, nor ought in reason to be any manner of hindrance to the † Effect which the plain and weightier and confessedly more important fundamental Doctrines ought to have upon the Hearts and Lives of Men.

* Sed perturbat nos opinionum varietas, hominumq; dissensio; & quia non idem contingit in sensibus, hos natura certos paravit; illa, quæ aliis sic, aliis secus, nec iisdem semper uno modo videntur, ficta esse dicimus. Quod est longe aliter. Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

† See above, pag. 242.

XIV. Fifthly; As this Revelation, to the Judgment of right and sober Reason, appears even of it self highly credible and probable; and abundantly recommends it self in its native Simplicity, merely by its own intrinsic goodness and excellency, to the practise of the most rational and considering Men, who are desirous in all their Actions to have satisfaction and comfort and good hope within themselves, from the Conscience of what they do: So it is moreover positively and directly proved, to be actually and immediately sent us from God; by the many infallible Signs and Miracles, which the Author of it worked publicly as the evidence of his divine Commission; by the exact completion both of the Prophecies that went before concerning him, and of those that He himself delivered concerning things that were

to happen after; and by the Testimony of his Followers; which in all its Circumstances was the most credible, certain, and convincing Evidence, that was ever given to any matter of Fact in the World,

First, The Christian Revelation is positively and directly proved, to be actually and immediately sent to us from God, by the many infallible Signs and Miracles, which the Author of it worked publickly as the Evidence of his Divine Commission.

Besides the great Excellency and Reasonableness of the Doctrine considered in it self, of which we have already treated; It is here of no small moment to observe, that the Author of it (separate from all external Proof of his Divine Commission) appeared in all his Behaviour, Words and Actions, to be neither an

* Impostor nor an Enthusiast. His Life was Innocent and Spotless, spent entirely in serving the Ends of Holiness and Charity, in doing good to the Souls and Bodies of Men, in exhorting them to Repentance, and inviting them to serve and glorifie God. When his bitterest Enemies accused him, in order to take away his Life; they could not charge

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* Πεντήκοντα ἔτη αὐτῶν
ἢ πρὶς τῆς ἀλλοτρίως
τοῦ πατρὸς ἰσχυρῶς,
πρὸς τὴν ἑκκλησίαν,
συνεστῆς τῇ καὶ τῇ ἀλ-
λῃ ἀρετῇ διδασκαλῇ
τοῖς ἀπαποστόλοις μαρτυ-
ρεῖται. &c. Euseb. De-
monstrat. Evangelic. lib. 3.
c. 3.

him with any appearance of Vice or Immorality: And so far was he from being guilty of what they did accuse him of, namely of Vain-glory and attempting to move Sedition; that once, when the admiring People would by force have taken him and made him their King, he chose even to work a Miracle to avoid that, which was the only thing that could be imagined to have been the Design of an *Impostor*. In like manner, whoever seriously considers the Answers he gave to all Questions whether moral or captious, his occasional Discourses to his Disciples, and more especially the Wisdom and Excellency of his Sermon upon the Mount, which is as it were the System and Summary of his Doctrine, manifestly surpassing all the moral Instructions of the most celebrated Philosophers that ever lived; cannot, without the extreme malice and obstinacy in the World, charge him with *Enthusiasm*.

Of the Miracles of Christ, as the Evidence of his Divine Commission. These Considerations cannot but add great Weight and Authority to his Doctrine, and make his own Testimony concerning himself exceedingly credible. But the *positive and direct* proof of his Divine Commission, are the *Miracles* which he worked for that purpose: His healing the Sick: His giving Sight to the Blind: His

His casting out Devils: His raising the Dead: The Wonders that attended his Crucifixion: His own Resurrection from the Dead; His Appearance afterwards to his Disciples: And his Ascension visibly into Heaven.

These, and the rest of his stupendous Miracles, were, to the Disciples that saw them, sensible Demonstrations of our Lord's Divine Commission. And to those who have lived since that Age, they are as certain Demonstrations of the same Truth, as the Testimony of those first Disciples who were Eye-witnesses of them, is certain and true.

To the Disciples that saw them, these Miracles were sensible and compleat Demonstrations of our Lord's Divine Commission; because they were so great and so many and so publick and so evident, that it was absolutely impossible they should be the Effect of any Art of Man, of any Chance or Fallacy: And the Doctrine they were brought to confirm, was of so good and holy a Tendency, that it was impossible he should be inabled to work them by the Power and Assistance of Evil Spirits: So that consequently, they must of Necessity have been performed, either immediately, or mediately, by God himself.

of Mira-
cles in ge-
neral.

But here, because there have been many Questions raised, and some perplexity introduced, by the disputes and different Opinions of learned Men concerning the Power of Working Miracles, and concerning the Extent of the Evidence which Miracles give to the Truth of any Doctrine; And because it hath been much controverted, whether true Miracles can be worked by any less Power, than the immediate Power of God; and whether to compleat the Evidence of a Miracle, the Nature of the Doctrine pretended to be proved thereby, is requisite to be taken into the Consideration, or no: It may not perhaps be improper, upon this occasion, to endeavour to set this whole Matter in its true Light, as briefly and clearly as I can.

That in re-
spect of the
Power of
God, all
things are
alike easy.

1st then, In respect of the Power of God, and in respect to the Nature of the things themselves absolutely speaking, all things that are possible at all, that is, which imply not a direct contradiction, are equally and alike easy to be done. The power of God, extends equally to great things, as to small; and to many, as to few: And the one makes no more Difficulty at all, or resistance to his Will, than the other.

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'Tis not therefore a right Distinction, to define or distinguish a Miracle by any *absolute difficulty* in the Nature of the thing it self to be done; As if the things we call *natural*, were absolutely and in their own Nature easier to be effected, than those that we look upon as *miraculous*. On the contrary 'tis evident and undeniable, that 'tis at least as great an Act of Power, to cause the Sun or a Planet to Move at all; as to cause it to stand still at any Time: Yet this latter, we call a Miracle; the former not. And, to restore the dead to life, which is an instance of an extraordinary Miracle; is in it self plainly altogether as easy, as to dispose matter at first into such order, as to form a humane Body in that which we commonly call a natural way. So that absolutely speaking, in *This strict and philosophical Sense*; either nothing is miraculous, namely if we have respect to the Power of God; or, if we regard our own Power and Understanding, then almost every thing, as well what we call natural, as what we call supernatural, is in this sense really miraculous; and 'tis only *usualness* or *unusualness* that makes the distinction.

That therefore Miracles ought not to be defined by any absolute difficulty in the nature of the things themselves to be done.

2. What degrees of Power God may reasonably be supposed to have communicated

What degrees of Power, God

may have communicated to Created Beings, is not possible for us to determine.

communicated to Created Beings, to subordinate Intelligences, to good or evil Angels; is by no means possible for us to determine. Some things absolutely impossible for Men to effect, 'tis evident may easily be within the natural Powers of Angels; and some things beyond the Power of inferior Angels, may as easily be supposed to be within the Natural Power of others that are superior to them; and so on. So that, excepting the original Power of Creating, which we cannot indeed conceive communicable to Things which were themselves created; we can hardly affirm with any Certainty, that any particular Effect, how great or miraculous soever it may seem to us, is beyond the Power of all Created Beings in the Universe to have produced.

That therefore a Miracle is not rightly defined to be such an effect, as could not have been produced by any less Power than the Divine Omnipotence.

'Tis not therefore a right Definition, to define a Miracle (as some very learned and very pious Men have done,) to be such an Effect as could not have been produced by any less Power than the Divine Omnipotence. There is no Instance of any Miracle in Scripture, which to any ordinary Spectator would necessarily imply an immediate Creation of something out of nothing: And consequently such a Spectator could never be certain, that the miraculous Effect was beyond the Power of all created

ated Beings in the Universe to produce. There is one Supposition indeed, upon which the Opinion of all Miracles being necessarily the immediate Effects of the Divine Omnipotence, may be defended; And that is, if God, together with the natural Powers wherewith he hath indued all subordinate Intelligent Beings, has likewise given a Law or Restraining, whereby they be hindered from ever interposing in this lower World, to produce any of those effects which we call miraculous or supernatural: But then, how certain soever it is, that all Created Beings are under some particular Laws and Restraints; yet it can never be proved, that they are under such Restraints universally, perpetually, and without exception: And without this, a Spectator that sees a Miracle, can never be certain that it was not done by some Created Intelligence. Reducing the natural Power of Created Beings to as low a degree as any one can desire to suppose, will help nothing in this matter; For, supposing (which is very unreasonable to suppose) that the natural Powers of the highest Angels, were no greater than the natural Powers of Men; yet since thereby an Angel would be inabled to do all That invisibly, which a Man can do visibly; he would even in
this

this Supposition be naturally able to do numberless things, which we should esteem the greatest of Miracles.

All things that are done in the World, are done either immediately by God himself, or by created Intelligent Beings; Matter being capable of no Laws or Powers. And consequently there is, properly speaking, no such thing as the Course or Power of Nature.

pag 17.

3. All things that are Done in the World, are done either immediately by God himself, or by created Intelligent Beings: Matter being evidently not at all capable of any Laws or Powers whatsoever, any more than it is capable of Intelligence; excepting only this One Negative Power, that every part of it will, of itself, always and necessarily continue in that State, whether of Rest or Motion, wherein it at present is. So that all those things which we commonly say are the effects of the Natural Powers of Matter, and Laws of Motion; of Gravitation, Attraction, or the like; are indeed (if we will speak strictly and properly) the effects of God's acting upon Matter continually and every moment, either immediately by himself, or mediately by some created intelligent Beings: (Which Observation, by the by, furnishes us, as has been before noted, with an excellent natural Demonstration of Providence.) Consequently there is no such thing, as what Men commonly call the Course of Nature, or the Power of Nature. The Course of Nature, truly and properly speaking, is nothing else but the Will of God producing certain Effects

Effects in a continued, regular, constant and uniform Manner: Which Course or Manner of Acting, being in every moment perfectly *Arbitrary*, is as easie to be altered at any time, as to be *preserved*. And if, (as seems most probable,) this continual Acting upon Matter, be performed by the subserviency of created Intelligences, appointed to that purpose by the Supreme Creator; then it is as easy for any of them, and as much within their natural Power, (by the Permission of God,) to alter the Course of Nature at any time, or in any respect; as it is to *preserve* or *continue* it.

'Tis not therefore a right Distinction, to define a *Miracle* to be That which is against the Course of Nature: meaning by the Course of Nature, the Power of Nature, or the Natural Powers of Created Agents. For, in this Sense, 'tis no more against the Course of Nature, for an Angel to keep a Man from sinking in the Water, than for a Man to hold a Stone from falling in the Air, by over-powering the Law of Gravitation; And yet the one is a Miracle, the other not so. In like manner, 'tis no more above the natural Power of a created Intelligence, to stop the Motion of the Sun or of a Planet, than to continue to carry it on in its usual Course; And

That therefore a Miracle is not rightly defined to be That which is against the Course of Nature, or above the natural Powers of Created Agents.

And yet the former is a Miracle, the latter not so. But if by the *Course of Nature*, be meant only (as it truly signifies) the *constant and uniform manner* of Gods acting either immediately or mediately in preserving and continuing the Order of the World; then, in that Sense, indeed a Miracle may be rightly defined to be an effect produced contrary to the usual Course or Order of Nature, by the unusual Interposition of some Intelligent Being Superiour to Men; as I shall have occasion presently to observe more particularly.

The unreasonableness of those who deny the Possibility of Miracles in general.

And from this Observation, we may easily discover the Vanity and Unreasonableness of that obstinate Prejudice, which Modern Deists have universally taken up, against the Belief of Miracles in general. They see that things generally go on in a constant and regular Method; that the Frame and Order of the World, is preserved by things being disposed and managed in an Uniform manner; that certain Causes produce certain Effects in a continued Succession, according to certain fixed Laws or Rules; And from hence they conclude, very weakly and unphilosophically, that there are in *Matter* certain necessary *Laws or Powers*, the Result of which is That which they call the *Course of Nature*, which they think is impossible to be changed

4. Those

Some Effects prove the constant Providence of God, and Others prove the occasional Interposition either of God himself, or of some Intelligent Being Superior to Man.

4. Those Effects which are produced in the World regularly and constantly, which we call the *Works of Nature*, prove to us in general, the Being, the Power, and the other Attributes of God. Those Effects, which, upon any rare and extraordinary Occasion, are produced in such manner, that 'tis manifest they could neither have been done by any Power or Art of Man, nor by what we call Chance, that is, by any Composition or refusal of those Laws which are Gods constant and uniform Actings upon Matter; These undeniably prove to us the immediate and occasional Interposition either of God himself, or at least of some intelligent Agent Superior to Men, at that particular Time, and on that particular Account. For example: The regular and continual Effects of the Power of Gravitation, and of the Laws of Motion; of the Mechanick, and of the Animal Powers; All these prove to us in general, the Being, the Power, the Presence, and the constant Operation, either immediate or mediate, of God in the World. But if, upon any particular Occasion, we should see a Stone suspended in the Air, or a Man walking upon the Water, without any visible support; a chronic Disease cured with a word speaking, or a dead and corrupted Body restored to life in a moment; We could not

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then doubt, but there was an *extraordinary* Interposition either of God himself, in order to signify his pleasure upon that particular Occasion; or at least of some Intelligent Agent far superiour to Man, in order to bring about some particular Design.

5. Whether such an Extraordinary Interposition of some Power Superiour to Men, be the immediate Interposition of God Himself, or of some good Angel, or of some evil Angel; can hardly be distinguished certainly, merely by the Work or Miracle it self: (except there be a plain Creation of something out of nothing, which, as I have said, there does not *certainly* appear to be in any of the Miracles recorded in Scripture:) Because it is impossible for Us to know with any *certainly*, either that the natural Power of good Angels, or of evil ones, extends not beyond such or such a certain limit; or that God always restrains them from exercising their natural Powers in producing such or such particular Effects. Some singular Miracles, such as *Raising the Dead*, there is indeed all the Reason in the World to believe are absolutely beyond the power of evil Spirits to effect; because we have all Reason to believe, that the Souls of Men are in the Hand of God, and cannot be removed by the na-

Whether such Interposition be the immediate Work of God, or of some Good or Evil Angel; can hardly be discovered merely by the Work it self.

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tural Power of any inferior Beings: But there are not many other Instances, wherein we can *certainly* say or determine, that this or that particular thing is absolutely beyond the natural Power of Good or Evil Spirits.

That there is no reason to suppose all the Wonders worked by Evil Spirits, to be mere Delusions.

'Tis not therefore a right Distinction, to suppose the Wonders which the Scripture attributes to evil Spirits, to be mere *Prostigia*, *Sleights*, or *Delusions*. For if the Devil has any natural Power of doing any thing at all, even but so much as the meanest of Men; and be not restrained by God from exercising that natural Power; 'tis evident he will be able, by reason of his Invisibleness, to work *true and real Miracles*. Neither is it a right Distinction, to suppose the Miracles of Evil Spirits, not to be *real Effects* in the things where they appear, but *Impositions upon the Senses* of the Spectators: For to impose in this manner upon the Senses of Men, (not by Sleights and Delusions; but by really so affecting the Organs of Sense, as to make things appear what they are not;) is to all intents and purposes as *true* a Miracle, and as *great* an one, as making real changes in the Things themselves.

How we are to distinguish Miracles

6. When therefore upon any particular Occasion; for instance, when at the Will of a Person who teaches some

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some new Doctrine as coming from God, and in Testimony to the Truth of that Doctrine, there is plainly and manifestly an Interposition of some *Superiour Power*, producing such miraculous Effects as have been before mentioned: The only possible ways, by which a Spectator may certainly and infallibly distinguish, whether those Miracles be indeed the Works either immediately of God himself, or, (which is the very same thing,) of some Good Angel employed by him; and consequently the Doctrine witnessed by the Miracles, be infallibly true and divinely attested; Or whether, on the contrary, the Miracles be the works of Evil Spirits, and consequently the Doctrine a fraud and imposition upon Men: The only possible ways (I say) of distinguishing this matter certainly and infallibly, are these. If the Doctrine attested by Miracles, be in it self *impious*, or manifestly *tending to promote Vice*; then without all question the Miracles, how great soever they may appear to Us, are neither wrought by God himself, nor by his Commission; because our natural Knowledge of the Attributes of God, and of the necessary difference between Good and Evil, is greatly of more force to prove any such Doctrine to be false, than any Miracles in the World can be to

wrought by
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prove it true: As for example, suppose a Man pretending to be a Prophet, should work any Miracle, or give any Sign or Wonder whatsoever, in order to draw Men from the Worship of the True God, and tempt them to Idolatry, and to the Practise of such Vices, as in all Heathen Nations have usually attended the Worship of False Gods; nothing can be more infallibly certain, than that such Miracles ought at first sight to be rejected as Diabolical. If the

Deut. 13. Doctrine attested by Miracles, be in
 1, &c. it self indifferent, that is, such as cannot by the Light of Nature and right Reason alone, be certainly known whether it be true or false; and at the same time, in opposition to it, and in proof of the direct contrary Doctrine, there be wrought other Miracles, more and greater than the former, or at least attended with such Circumstances, as evidently show the Power by which these latter are worked, to be superiour to the Power that worked the former; then that Doctrine which is attested by the *Superiour Power*, must necessarily be believed to be Divine: This was the Case of *Moses*, and the *Egyptian Magicians*: The *Magicians* worked several Miracles to prove that *Moses* was an Impostour, and not sent of God; *Moses*, to prove his Divine Commission

Commission, worked Miracles more and greater than theirs; or else (which is the very same thing,) the Power by which He worked his Miracles, restrained the Power by which They worked theirs, from being able at that time to work all the same Miracles that He did; and so appeared evidently the *Superiour Power*: Wherefore it was necessarily to be believed, that *Moses's Commission* was truly from God. If, in the last place, the Doctrine attested by Miracles, be such as in its own Nature and Consequences tends to promote the Honour and Glory of God, and the practise of universal Righteousness amongst Men; and yet nevertheless be not in it self demonstrable, nor could without Revelation have been discovered to be actually true; (or even if it was but only indifferent in it self, and such as could not be proved to be any way contrary to, or inconsistent with these great Ends,) and there be no pretense of more or greater Miracles on the opposite side, to contradict it; (Which is the Case of the *Doctrine and Miracles of Christ*;) Then the Miracles are unquestionably Divine, and the Doctrine must without all controversy be acknowledged as an immediate and infallible Revelation from God: Because, (besides *Mat. 11*) that it cannot be supposed that Evil ²⁵.

Spirits would overthrow their own Power and Kingdom;) should God in such Cases as these, permit Evil Spirits to work Miracles to impose upon Men, the Error would be absolutely invincible; and That would in all respects be the very same thing, as if God worked the Miracles to deceive Men himself. No Man can doubt, but Evil Spirits, if they have any natural Powers at all, have power to destroy Mens Bodies and Lives, and to bring upon Men innumerable other Calamities, which yet in Fact 'tis evident God restrains them from doing, by having set them Laws and Bounds which they cannot pass. Now, for the very same Reason, it is infinitely certain that God restrains them likewise from imposing upon Mens Minds and Understandings, in all such Cases. where Wise and Honest and Virtuous Men would have no possible way left, by which they could discover the Imposition.

The difference between those who teach that the immediate power of God is, or is not, necessarily requisite to the working of a Miracle;

And here at last the difference between Those who believe that all Miracles necessarily require the immediate Power of God himself to effect them, and those who believe created Spirits able to work Miracles, is not very great. They who believe all Miracles to be effected only by the immediate Power of God, must do it upon this Ground,

Ground, that they suppose God by *is not very*
a perpetual Law restrains all sub- *great at*
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interposing at any time to alter
the regular course of things in this
lower World; (for, to say that
created Spirits have not otherwise
a Natural Power, when unrestrained,
to do what we call Miracles; is
saying that those invisible Agents
have no Power naturally to do any
thing at all.) And they who be-
lieve that subordinate Beings have
Power to work Miracles, must yet
of necessity suppose that God re-
strains them in all such Cases at
least, where there would not be suf-
ficient Marks left, by which the Frauds
of evil Spirits could be clearly
distinguished from the Testimony and
Commission of God.

And now from these few clear
and undeniable Propositions, it evident-
ly follows;

1st. That the true Definition of *The true*
a Miracle, in the Theological Sense of *Definition*
the Word, is this; that it is a *of a Mira-*
work effected in a manner *unusual,*
or different from the common and
regular Method of Providence, by
the interposition either of God him-
self, or of some Intelligent Agent
superiour to Man, for the Proof
or Evidence of some particular Do-
ctrine, or in attestation to the Autho-
rity

rity of some particular Person. And if a Miracle so worked, be not opposed by some plainly superiour Power; nor be brought to attest a Doctrine either *contradictory* in it self, or *vitious* in its consequences; (a Doctrine of which kind, no Miracles in the World can be sufficient to prove;) then the Doctrine so attested must necessarily be looked upon as Divine, and the Worker of the Miracle entertained as having infallibly a Commission from God.

*The
Strength of
the Evi-
dence of
our Savi-
ours Mira-
cles.*

2. From hence it appears, that the compleat *Demonstration* of our Saviours being a Teacher sent from God, was, to the Disciples who saw *his Miracles*, plainly This: That the *Doctrine* he taught, being in it self possible; and in its consequences, Tending to promote the Honour of God and true Righteousness among Men; and the *Miracles* he worked, being such, that there neither was nor could be any pretense of more or greater Miracles to be set up in opposition to them; it was as infallibly certain that he had truly a Divine Commission, as it was certain that God would not himself impose upon Men a necessary and invincible Errour.

*Concerning
the Objection,
that*

2. From hence it appears how little reason there is, to object, as some

some have done, that we prove in a Circle the *Doctrine* by the *Miracles*, and the *Miracles*, by the *Doctrine*. For the *Miracles*, in this way of reasoning, are not at all proved by the *Doctrine*; but only the possibility and the good Tendency, or at least the Indifferency of the *Doctrine*, are a necessary Condition or Circumstance, without which the *Doctrine* is not capable of being proved by any *Miracles*. They are indeed the *Miracles* only, that prove the *Doctrine*; and not the *Doctrine*, that proves the *Miracles*: But then in order to this End, that the *Miracles* may prove the *Doctrine*, it is always necessarily to be first supposed that the *Doctrine* be such as is in its nature capable of being proved by *Miracles*. The *Doctrine* must be in it self possible and capable to be proved, and then *Miracles* will prove it to be actually and certainly true. The *Doctrine* is not first known or supposed to be true, and then the *Miracles* proved by it; But the *Doctrine* must be first known to be such as is possible to be true, and then *Miracles* will prove that it actually is so. Some *Doctrines* are in their own nature necessarily and demonstrably true, such as are all those which concern the obligation of plain moral Precepts; And these neither need nor can receive any stronger proof from *Miracles*,

we prove in a Circle the *Miracles* by the *Doctrine*, and the *Doctrine* by the *Miracles*.

Miracles, than what they have already (though not perhaps so clearly indeed to all Capacities,) from the Evidence of right Reason. Other Doctrines are in their own Nature necessarily false and impossible to be true, such as are all *Absurdities and Contradictions*, and all Doctrines that tend to promote *Vice*; And these can never receive any degree of proof, from all the Miracles in the World. Lastly, Other Doctrines are in their own Nature *indifferent*, or *possible*, or perhaps *probable* to be true; And these could not have been known to be positively true, but by the Evidence of Miracles, which prove them to be certain. To apply this to the *Doctrine and Miracles of Christ*. The moral part of our Saviours Doctrine would have appeared infallibly true, whether he had ever worked any Miracles or no. The rest of his Doctrine was what evidently Tended to promote the Honour of God, and the practise of Righteousness amongst Men: Therefore That part also of his Doctrine, was possible and very probable to be true; But yet it could not from thence be known to be certainly true, nor ought to have been received as a Revelation from God, unless it had been proved by undeniable *Miracles*. And the Miracles he worked, did indeed unde-

ly prove it to be the Doctrine of God. Nevertheless, had his Doctrine in any part of it been either absurd and contradictory in it self, or vicious in its Tendency and Consequences; no Miracles could then possibly have proved it to have been true. 'Tis evident therefore that the Nature of the Doctrine to be proved, must be taken into the Consideration; as a necessary Circumstance; and yet, that only the Miracles are properly the Proof of the Doctrine; and not the Doctrine, of the Miracles.

4. From hence it follows, that the pretended Miracles of *Apollonius Tyaneus*, *Aristeas Proconnesius*, and some others among the Heathens, even supposing them to have been true Miracles, (which yet there is no Reason at all to believe, because they are very poorly attested, and are in themselves very mean and trifling, has been fully shown by *Eusebius* in his Book against *Hierocles*, and many late Writers; but supposing them, I say, to have been true Miracles,) yet they will prove nothing at all to the disadvantage of Christianity; because they were worked either without any pretense of confirming any new Doctrine at all; or else to prove absurd and foolish Things; or to establish Idolatry and the Worship of

Of the pretended Miracles of Apollonius and others.

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of False Gods; And consequently they could not be done by the divine Power and Authority, nor bear

* Διὰ τὴν ἐκ τῆς βεβαι-
σινισμένης τῆς ἐπαγγελ-
λουμένης τῆς δυνάμεως ἐξ-
επόμενης ἀπὸ τοῦ βίου καὶ
τοῦ ἡθους καὶ τοῦ ἐκκολλη-
θέντων ταῖς δυνάμεσιν,
ἢ τοις οἷς βλάστη καὶ ἀν-
θρώπων, ἢ οἷς ἡδὼν ἐπα-
νόρδωσιν; Origen. advers.
Cels. lib. 2.

Μίσον τοίνυν σαυτὸν
στήσας καὶ περὶ τῆς Δεξιᾶς γινώσκων, καὶ καὶ περὶ τῆς
ἰσορρομίας, ἵνα εἰ μὴ ἐκ τῆς ἀποκατάρσεως, καὶ τῆς ὠφελιμότητος
ἐκ τῆς ἡδὼν ἐπανόρδωσιν καὶ ἐνλαλῆσαι τὴν πρὸς τὴν ἐπὶ πάντων
ἔσιν εἰπεῖν ὅτι πιστεύουσιν μὴ ὡς ἐκ ἀδελφῶν γενομένοις πρὸς
καὶ Ἰησοῦ ἰσορρομίοις, καὶ τῶν περὶ τὴν Προκοπήν τῆς Δε-
ξιᾶς. Τὴν μὲν γὰρ βεβαιότητα ἢ πρόνοιαν τῆς τοῦ Δεξιᾶς
ἐνδοξασίας ἐπαγγελλόμενος, καὶ τὴν ὠφελίαν τῆς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου
γένεως βεβαιούμενος, τὰ πλεονεκτήματα (ὡς εἶπεν) ἐπιδείκνυτο, καὶ ἐχρη-
σάμενος. Id. lib. 3.

To return therefore to the Argu-
ment. The Miracles (I say) which
our Saviour wrought, were, to the
Disciples that saw them, sensible De-
monstrations of his Divine Commis-
sion. And to those who have lived
since that Age, they are as certain
Demonstrations of the same Truth
as the Testimony of those first Dis-
ciples who were Eye-witnesses of
them, is certain and true: Which I shall
have occasion to consider presently.

Secondly

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Secondly, The Divine Authority of the Christian Revelation, is positively and directly proved, by the Exact Completion both of all those Prophecies that went before concerning our Lord, and of those that He himself delivered concerning things that were to happen after.

Of the fulfilling the Prophecies, as an Evidence of our Saviour's Divine Commission.

Concerning the Messiah it was foretold, (Gen. 49, 10,) that he should come, before the Scepter departed from Judah: And accordingly Christ appeared a little before the Time, when the Jewish Government was totally destroyed by the Romans. It was foretold that he should come before the Destruction of the second Temple, (Hagg. 2, 7;) The desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this House with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts; The glory of this latter House shall be greater than of the former: And accordingly Christ appeared, some time before the Destruction of the City and Temple. It was foretold that he should come at the End of 490 Years, after the rebuilding of Jerusalem which had been laid waste during the Captivity, (Dan. 9, 24;) and that he should be cut off; and that, after That, the City and Sanctuary should be destroyed and made desolate: And accordingly, at what time soever the beginning of the four hundred and ninety years can, according

ding to any Interpretation of the words, be fixt; the End of them will fall about the Time of Christ's appearing; and 'tis well known how entirely the City and Sanctuary were destroyed some years after his being cut off. It was foretold that he should do many great and beneficial Miracles; that the Eyes of the Blind (Isai. 35, 5,) should be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf unstopped, that the lame Man should leap as a hart, and the tongue of the Dumb sing. And this was literally fulfilled in the Miracles of Christ; The Blind received their Sight, (Mat. 11, 5,) and the lame walked; the deaf heard, &c. It was foretold that he should die a violent death, (Isai. 53, throughout,) and That not for himself, (Dan. 9. 26,) but for our Transgressions, (Isai. 53; 6, & 12,) for the iniquity of us all, and that he might bear the Sin of many: All which, was exactly accomplished in the Sufferings of Christ. It was foretold, (Gen. 49, 10,) that to him should the gathering of the People be, and (Psal. 2, 8,) that God would give him the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost parts of the Earth for his Possession: which was punctually fulfilled by the wonderful Success of the Gospel, and its universal spreading through the World. Lastly, Many minuter Circumstances

were

were foretold of the Messiah; that he should be of the Tribe of Judah, and of the Seed of David; that he should be born in the Town of Bethlehem (*Mic. 5, 2*;) that he should ride upon an Ass in humble Triumph into the City of Jerusalem, (*Zech. 9, 9*;) that he should be sold for thirty pieces of Silver, (*Zech. 11, 12*;) that he should be Scourged, Buffeted, and Spit upon, (*Isai. 50, 6*;) that his Hands and Feet should be pierced, (*Psal. 22, 16*;) that he should be numbered among Malefactors, (*Isai. 53, 12*;) that he should have gall and vinegar offered him to drink, (*Psal. 69, 21*;) that they who saw him crucified, should mock at him, and at his trusting in God to deliver him, (*Psal. 22, 8*;) that the Soldiers should cast lots for his garments, (*Psal. 22, 18*;) that he should make his grave with the Rich, (*Isai. 53, 9*;) and that he should rise again without seeing Corruption, (*Psal. 16, 10*.) All which Circumstances were fulfilled to the greatest possible exactness, in the person of Christ: Not to mention the numberless typical representations, which had likewise evidently their complete Accomplishment in Him. And 'tis no less evident, that none of these Prophecies can possibly be applied to any other person, that ever pretended to be the Messiah.

Further,

Of the Prophecies that Christ himself delivered concerning things that were to happen after.

Further; The Prophecies or Predictions which Christ delivered Himself, concerning things that were to happen after; are no less strong proofs of the Truth and Divine Authority of his Doctrine, than the Prophecies were, which went before concerning Him. He did very particularly and at several times foretell his own Death, and the Circumstances of it, (Mat. 16, 21;) that the chief Priests and Scribes should condemn him to Death, and deliver him to the Gentiles, that is, to Pilate and the Roman Soldiers, to mock and scourge and crucify him, (Mat. 20, 18 & 19;) that he should be betrayed into their hands, (Mat. 20, 18;) that Judas Iscariot was the person who would betray him, (Mat. 26, 23;) that all his Disciples would forsake him and flee, (Mat. 26, 31;) that Peter particularly, would thrice deny him in one Night, (Mar. 14, 30.) He foretold further, that he would rise again the third Day, (Mat. 16, 21;) that after his Ascension, he would send down the Holy Ghost upon his Apostles, (Job. 15, 26;) which should enable them to work many Miracles, (Mar. 16, 17.) He foretold also the Destruction of Jerusalem with such very particular Circumstances, in the whole 24th Chapter of St Matthew; and the 13th of St Mark, and 21st of St Luke; that

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no Man who reads *Josephus's* History of that dreadful and unparalleled Calamity, can, without the greatest Obstinacy imaginable, doubt of our Saviours divine Fore-knowledge. Lastly, He foretold likewise many particulars concerning the future Success of the Gospel, and what should happen to several of his Disciples: He foretold what opposition and persecution they should meet withal in their preaching, (*Mat. 10, 17;*) He foretold what particular Kind of Death *St Peter* should die, (*Joh. 21, 18;*) and hinted, that *St John* should live till after the destruction of Jerusalem, (*Joh. 21, 22;*) and foretold, that notwithstanding all Opposition and Persecutions, the Gospel should yet have such Success, as to spread it self over the World; (*Mat. 16, 18; 24, 14; 28, 19.*) All and every one of which particulars, were exactly accomplished, without failing in any respect.

Some of these things are of permanent and visible Effects, even unto this day. But the greatest part of them were *sensible and ocular Demonstrations* of the Truth of our Lords Doctrine, only to those persons who lived at the Time when they happened. Wherefore,

Thirdly, The chief Evidence of the *Of the Testimony of* facts on which the Truth and Certainty *of our Saviour*

ours Dis-
ciples, as
an Evi-
dence of
the Truth
of the
Christian
Revela-
tion.

What
things are
requisite
to make
the Testi-
mony of
our Savi-
ours Disci-
ples a com-
plete Evi-
dence.

That the
Apostles
could not
be imposed
upon, them-
selves.

of the Christian Revelation depends to Us who live Now at this distance of Time, is the Testimony of our Saviours Followers; Which in all its Circumstances, was the most credible, certain, and convincing Evidence, that was ever given to any Matter of Fact in the World.

To make the Testimony of our Saviours Followers a sufficient Evidence to Us in This Case, there can be required but these three things. 1st. That it be certain, the Apostles could not be imposed upon *Themselves*. 2. That it be certain, they neither had nor could have any design to impose upon Others. And 3. That it be certain, their Testimony is truly conveyed down to us, unto this Day. All which things are indeed abundantly certain, and clear enough to satisfy any reasonable and unprejudiced Person.

For 1. That the Apostles could not be imposed upon *Themselves*, is evident from what has been already said concerning the Nature and Number and Publickness of our Saviours Miracles. They conversed from the beginning with our Saviour himself; They heard with their Ears, and saw with their Eyes; they looked upon, and they handled with their Hands of the Word of Life, as St John expresses it, 1 John 1. They saw all the Prophecies of

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the Old Testament precisely fulfilled in his *Life and Doctrine*, his *Sufferings* and *Death*. They saw him confirm what he taught, with such mighty and evident Miracles, as his bitterest and most malicious Enemies could not but confess to be supernatural, even at the same time that they obstinately blasphemed the Holy Spirit that wrought them. They saw him alive after his *Passion*, by many infallible Proofs; he appearing, not only to one or two, but to all the Eleven, several times; and once to above five hundred together. And this, not merely in a transient manner; but they conversed with him familiarly for no less than forty Days; and at last they beheld him ascend visibly into Heaven; and quickly after, they received the Spirit, according to his Promise. These were such sensible Demonstrations of his being a Teacher sent from Heaven, and consequently that his Doctrine was an immediate and express Revelation of the Will of God; that if the Apostles, even though they had been Men of the *weakest* Judgments and *strongest* Imaginations that can be supposed, could be all and every one of them deceived in all these several Instances; men can have no use of their Senses, nor any possible Proof of any Facts whatsoever; nor any means to distinguish the best attested Truths in

the World, from Enthusiastick Imaginations.

That the Apostles could have no design of imposing upon others.

2. It is certain, the Apostles neither had nor could have any design of imposing upon Others. This is evident both from the Nature of the things they did and suffered, and from the Characters of the Persons themselves. They confirmed what they taught, by *Signs and Miracles*; they lived according to the Doctrine they preached, though manifestly contrary to all the Interests and pleasures of this present World; and, which Deceivers can never be supposed to do, they died with all imaginable cheerfulness and joy of Mind, for the Testimony of their Doctrine, and the confirmation of their Religion. They were innocent and plain Men, Men that had no bad *Ends* to serve, nor *Preferment* to hope for in the World. Their Religion it self taught them to expect, not dominion and glory, not the praise of Men, not riches and honour, not power and ease, not pleasure nor profit; but poverty and want, trouble and vexation, persecution and oppression, imprisonments, banishments and death. These things are not the marks and tokens of Impostors. Besides; the *Success and Event* of their Undertaking; that plain and illiterate Men should be able to preach their Do-

ctrine

Strine to many different Nations of
 different Languages, and prevail also
 in establishing the Belief of it; that
 they should all agree exactly in their
 Testimony, and none of them be
 prevailed upon either by Hopes or
 Fears to desert their Companions and
 discover the Imposture, if there had
 been any; These things plainly show,
 that their Doctrine was more than
 Humane, and not a Contrivance to
 impose upon the World. This Ar-
 gument is excellently urged by Euse-
 bins; Is it a thing possible to be con-
 ceived, saith * he, that De-
 ceivers and unlearned Men,
 Men that understood no o-
 ther Language but their
 Mother-tongue, should ever
 think of attempting so ex-
 travagant a thing, as to
 travel over all Nations?
 and not only so, but that
 they should be able also
 to accomplish their design,
 and establish their doctrine
 in all parts of the World?
 Consider moreover how re-
 markable a thing it is,
 that they should in no re-
 spect disagree one from a-
 nother, in the Account
 they give of the Actions of
 Christ. For if in all Que-
 stions of Fact, and in all

* Καὶ αὖτις ὁ
 μαρτυρῶν ἐκ τῆς ἑξέως
 τῆς ἀνδραγίας καὶ
 μήτε λαλῶν μή
 πᾶσι τῆς ματ-
 ῆς πατριᾶς, μή
 ἀποδιδόναι τοιαύ-
 ταν ἐπὶ τῇ
 ἀπείρῳ περι-
 ᾷ περιελθόντας
 οὐκ ἐπὶ τῇ δό-
 ξῃ, ὅτι οὐκ
 ἔμελλεν ἀποδο-
 ῖν ἑαυτοῦ πρὸς
 ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἰσχυ-
 ρὸν ἐπὶ πάντων
 μένων περὶ τῶν
 τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ νόμοις
 εἰσὶν, καὶ ἐν ταῖς
 ἀμείνων ἡμετέ-
 ρων συμφωνίαις καὶ
 οὐκ ἐν τῇ ἀλήθει-
 ᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ
 ἀποστολῇ, ἀλλὰ
 τῶν Ἀποστόλων.

* Καὶ αὖτο ὁ πῦρ ἐ
μασὸν ἐκπλήξας, τὸ πά-
ρος ἀνδρας καὶ ιδιώτας
μήτε λαλῆν μήτε ἀκούει
πλέον τῆς ματρὸς θωνῇ
ἐπαμύνης, μὴ μόνον δι-
απονηθῆναι τολμᾷσαι προ-
ελθὲν ἐπὶ τῇ ἡβῇ ἰθὺς
ἀτρετων περίερον, ἀλλὰ
καὶ προσελθόντες καταρθε-
σαι τὸ ἐπιτήδεύει· οὐδέ-
ψαι δ' ὅπως ὄν ἐστι, καὶ τὸ
μηδένα μηδέωμι διαφωρον
ἵκενεγκὼν παρ' ἧς πρά-
ξεων ἢ Ἱησοῦ λόγον· οἱ
γὰρ ἐπὶ πάντων ἀμοιροῦ-
μένων περὶ γμάτων, ἔντε
τοῖς κατὰ νόμους διακρί-
σεις, καὶ ἐν ταῖς κοιναῖς
ἀμοιροσύνῃσι, ἥτις μαρτυ-
ραν συμφωνίαν καὶ τὸ ἀμ-
οιρογενῶσαν πῶς ἐκ αὐ-
τῇ ἀλήθειᾳ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν-
δε συστάει, διώδεται μὲν ὄν-
των Ἀποστόλων, ὁ βολυμῇ.

μοντα ὁ Μαθητὴς, μὲν
τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἐκτὸς,
πάντων θαυμασίων συμ-
φύγαν ἐμπεδευμένον,
ὁ μαρτυροῦντων καὶ τοῖς
ἰσχυροῖς, ἐκ ἀνιδρωτῆ, δια-
ὁ βασιλῶν ὑπομονῆς, καὶ
παύσης αἰκίας καὶ θανάτου;
Euseb. Demonstrat. Evang.
lib. 3. cap. 2.

Trials at Law; and in all
ordinary Disputes, the agree-
ment of several Witnesses
is always accounted suffi-
cient to determine satisfac-
tively the Matter in Questi-
on; is it not an abun-
dant Evidence of the Truth
in This case, that Twelve
Apostles, and Seventy Dis-
ciples, and innumerable other Believers,
have borne witness to the Actions of Christ,
with the most exact and perfect Agree-
ment among themselves; and not only so,
but have endured also all kinds of Tor-
ments, and even Death it self, to con-
firm their Testimony; Again: That illi-

† Κηρύττειν δ' ἀγχοί-
μους ἀνθρώπους εἰς πάντας, τὸ
τὸ Ἰησοῦ ὄνομα, καὶ τὰς
ἐν αὐτῶν τῶν Ρωμαίων
φύλιν καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν
βασιλευσίν τε καὶ πόλε-
μασιν, τὰς δὲ τῶν Περ-
σῶν, τὰς δὲ τῶν Ἀρμε-
νίων, ἑτέρας δὲ τὸ Παρ-
θον ἔθνος, καὶ αὖ πάλιν
τὸ Σκυθῶν, πρὸς δὲ
ἐν αὐτῶν τῆς οὐκε-
μένης εἰσελθὲν τὸ ἄλφρα, ἐπὶ
τῇ τῶν Ἰνδῶν φάσας
Χαίρας, καὶ ἑτέρας ὑπερ-
τὸν Ὀκεανὸν παρελθεῖν
ἐπὶ τὰς καλεμένας Βρε-
τανίας νήσους ταῦτα ἐκ
ἐγὼ γε ἠγνοῦμαι καὶ
ἀνθρώπων ἔθνος, μή τι γε καὶ
βουτελῆς καὶ ἰδιώτας, πολλὰ
δὲ δὲ καὶ πλάγους καὶ γόνι-
μους. Id. ibid. cap. 7.

terate Men, saith † he,
should preach the Name of
Christ in all parts of the
World; some of them in
Rome it self, the imperial
City; others, in Persia;
others, in Armenia; others,
in Parthia; others, in Scy-
thia; others, in India and
the furthest Parts of the
World; and others, beyond
the Sea, in the British
Isles: This I cannot but
think to be a Thing far
exceeding the Power of Man;
much more, the power of
ignorant and unlearned Men;
and still much more, the
Power of Cheats and De-
ceivers.

ceivers And again : No one of them, saith * he, being ever terrified at the Torments and Deaths of others, forsook his Companions, or ever preached contrary to them, and detected the forgery. Nay, on the contrary, That One, who did forsake his Master in his Life-time, and betray him to his Enemies; being Self-condemned, destroyed himself with his own Hands. And much more

* Οὐδὲς τε αὐτῶν πώποτε τὰ συμβάντα τοῖς ἀποστόλοις τρέψας, ἐξέστη τῆς ἀπιστίας, καὶ ἀντιλέγουσιν τοῖς ἄλλοις, εἰς ὅς ἀγαγὼν τὰ σωτηριώδη. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ ζῶντα πρεσβύτης παλιῆς αὐτοῦ, αὐτοχειρία καὶ ἑαυτοῦ ὡς ἐχέμεν τὸ δόγμα ἐπιστάτας. Id.

to the same purpose, may be found excellently said by the same Author, in the Seventh Chapter of the Third Book of his Demonstratio Evangelica.

3. It is very certain, that the Apostles Testimony concerning the Works and Doctrine of Christ, is truly and without corruption conveyed down to Us, even unto this Day. For they left this their Testimony in their Writings: Which Writings have been delivered down to us by an uninterrupted Succession through all intermediate ages. Their Books were all translated very early into several Languages, and dispersed through all parts of the World; and have most of them been acknowledged to be the genuine Writings of those whose

That the Apostles Testimony hath been truly conveyed down to Us.

Names they bear, even by the bitterest Enemies of Christianity in all Ages. Passages, containing the most material Doctrines, have been cited out of them by numberless Authors, who lived in every Age from the very Days of the Apostles unto this time: So that there is no room or possibility of any considerable corruption, such as might in any wise diminish our certainty of the Truth of the whole. In Summ; There is no matter of Fact in the World, attested in any History, with so many circumstances of credibility, with so many collateral Evidences, and in every respect attended with so many Marks of Truth; as This concerning the Doctrine and Works of Christ.

Of the Authority of the Books of Holy Scripture.

And here, by the by, it is to be observed, that the peculiar Authority which we attribute to the Books of Holy Scripture contained in the New Testament, is founded in this; that they were written or dictated by the Apostles themselves. The Apostles were indued with the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, at Pentecost: And this not only inabled them to preach the Doctrine of Christ with Power, but also effectually secured them from making any error, mistake, or false representation of it. And the very same Authority that by this singular Privilege was added to their Preaching,

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'tis manifest ought for the same reasons to be equally attributed to their *Writings* also. Now all the Books of the New Testament were either *written* by the Apostles: or, which is the very same thing, *approved and authorized* by them. Most of the Books were uncontrovertedly written by the *Apostles themselves*; St Paul having been made one of that number by a Commission from Heaven, no less visible and sensible, than that which was granted to the rest at *Pentecost*: And those Books which were written by the *Companions* of the Apostles, were either dictated or at least approved and authorized by the Apostles Themselves. Thus *Eusebius* expressly tells us, that St Peter reviewed and approved the Gospel of St Mark, and that * it was this approbation that authorized it to be received by the Churches. And *Irenaus*; that † what St Mark wrote, was dictated by St Peter; and that ‖ the Gospel of St Luke, was only a Transcript of St Paul's preaching. And *Tertullian* in like manner; that * St Mark was only St Peters Scribe, and St Luke St Pauls. And *Eusebius*; that St John

* Κυρωσάτω τὴν γὰρ γὰρ
οὐκ εἰς ἑνὸς τῶν ἐκ
κλήσεως. Euseb. Histor.
l. 2. c. 15.

† Marcus discipulus &
interpres Petri, quæ a
Petro annuntiata erant,
edidit. Iren. lib. 3. c. 1.

‖ Lucas sectator Pau-
li, quod ab illo prædica-
batur Evangelium in li-
bro condidit. Id. Ibid.
Vide & Tertullian. adv.
Marcion. lib. 4.

* Licet & Marcus quod
edidit, Petri adfirmetur,
cujus interpres Marcus:
also

*nam & Luca Digestum,
Paulo adscribere solent.
Tertull. adv. Marcion.
lib. 4.*

† Ἡ δὲ β. Μάρκου
ἀντὶ τῆς αὐτῆς εὐαγ-
γελίων τὴν ἐκδοσὶν πε-
ποιημένων, ἰωάννου ἀπο-
κρίσας μὲν φασιν, ἀλή-
θειαν αὐτοῖς ἐπιμαρτυρή-
σαντα. *Euseb. Hist. l. 3.
c. 24.*

|| Τινὲς ἠδὲ τῆς αὐτῆς
οὐκ ἔχοντες, πρὸς τῆς
Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίας οἱ καὶ
Παῦλος ἔσαν αὐτὴν ἀνταρ-
γεῖσαι φέροντες. *Id. lib. 3.
c. 3.*

*That the
Evidence
which God
has af-
forded us
of the
Truth of
our Reli-
gion, is a-
bundantly
sufficient.*

† also reviewed the Gospels of
St Mark and St Luke,
and confirmed the Truth of
them. And, to mention
no more, the same Histo-
rian tells us, that (besides
some smaller reasons drawn
from some mistaken Pas-
sages in the Book it-
self) the chief reason why
the Authority of the
Epistle to the Hebrews was questioned
by some, was || because
they thought it not to be
written by St Paul him-
self.

XV. Lastly, They who will not, by
the Arguments and Proofs before-men-
tioned, be convinced of the Truth and
Certainty of the Christian Religion, and
be persuaded to make it the Rule and
Guide of all their Actions; would not
be convinced, (so far as to Influence their
Practise and reform their Lives,) by
any other Evidence whatsoever; no more
though one should rise on purpose from
the Dead to endeavour to convince them.

From what has been said upon the
foregoing Heads, it is abundantly
evident that Men are not called up-
on to believe the Christian Religion
without very reasonable and sufficient
Proofs.

Proof, much less are they * required, to set up Faith in opposition to Reason; or to believe any thing for that very reason, because it is incredible. On the contrary, God has given us all the Proofs of the Truth of our Religion, that the Nature of the Thing would bear, or that were reasonable either for God

* *Λογισθε δε, ὅση δυνάμεις, ἀποδεδειγμένως δι' ἐργασιῶν καὶ ἀποκρίσεων περιεχόμεθα. Οὐδὲ λέγεται (τὸ κατὰ χλευῆς ὑπὲρ τοῦ Κέλεος εἰρημένον) ὅτι Περσεύσαν, ὃν εἰσηγυμύει σοι φῶτον ἔτι) ὑἱὸν Θεοῦ, καὶ ἢ δεδεδειμένον ἀπρότατα, ἢ κεκολλημένον αἰχμῇ. — Οὐδὲ φαμὲν, ταύτην καὶ μάλλον αἰσάμεθα. Origen. adv. Cels. lib. 6.*

to give, or Men to expect. And unless God should work upon Men by such Methods, as are wholly inconsistent with the design of Religion and the Nature of Virtue and Vice; which we are sure he will never do; nothing could have been done more, than has already been done, to convince Men of the Truth of Religion, and to perswade them to embrace their own Happiness. And indeed no reasonable Man can fail of being persuaded by the Evidence we now have. For if in other Cases, we assent to those Things as certain and demonstrated, which, if our Faculties of judging and reasoning do not necessarily deceive us, do upon the most impartial view appear clearly and plainly to be true; there is the same reason why in Moral and Religious matters we should look upon those things likewise

332 *The Evidences of Natural*

likewise to be *certain* and *demonstrated* which upon the *exactest* and *most* deliberate Judgment we are capable of making, do appear to us to be as clearly and certainly true, as 'tis certain that our *Faculties* do not necessarily and unavoidably deceive us, in all our judgments concerning the *Nature of God*, concerning the *proper happiness of Man*, and concerning the *Difference of Good and Evil*. And if in other cases, we always act without the least hesitation, upon the Credit of good and sufficient *Testimony*; and look upon that Man as foolish and ridiculous, who sustains great Losses, or lets slip great Opportunities and Advantages in business, only by distrusting the most credible and well-attested things in the World; 'tis plain there is the same reason, why we should do so also in Matters of Religion. So that unless our Actions be determined by some other thing, than by Reason and right judgment; the Evidence which we have of the great Truths of Religion, ought to have the same effect upon our Lives and Actions, as if they were proved to us by any other sort of Evidence that could be desired.

That the Cause of Mens Unbelief, is

'Tis true; the Resurrection of Christ and his other mighty works, must after all be confessed not to be such

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ocular Demonstrations of the Truth of his Divine Commission to After-Generations, as they were to those Men who then lived and saw him and conversed with him. But since the Matters of Fact are as clearly proved to Us, as 'tis possible for any matter of Fact at that distance of time to be; since the Evidence of *This*, is as great and greater, than of most of those things on which Men venture the whole of their secular Affairs, and on which they are willing to spend all their time and pains: Since (I say) the case is thus; He that will rather venture all that he can possibly enjoy, or suffer; he that will run the hazard of losing Eternal Happiness, and falling into Eternal Misery, rather than believe the *most credible and rational* thing in the World, merely because he does not see it with his Eyes; 'tis plain that That Man does not disbelieve the thing because he thinks the Evidence of it not sufficiently strong, but because 'tis contrary to some particular Vice of his, which makes it his interest that it should not be true; and for that reason he might also have disbelieved it, tho' he had seen it himself. Men may invent what vain pretenses they please, to excuse their infidelity and their Wickedness; But certainly That Man who can despise the

not want
of better
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to prove
the great
Truths of
Religion.

the Authority both of Reason and Scripture in conjunction; who can elude the plainest Evidence of matter of Fact; who can be deaf to all the promises and kind admonitions of the Gospel, and to all the threatenings and terrible denuntiations of the wrath of God, made known in good measure by the Light of Nature, and confirmed by the addition of express Revelation; Certainly (I say) That Man must have some *other Reason* for his unbelief, than the pretended Want of sufficient Evidence. Did Men follow the unprejudiced judgment of their own Minds, and the impartial dictates of natural Reason; the least possibility of obtaining eternal Happiness, or the least suspicion of falling into endless Misery, would immediately determine them to make it the great study and business of their Lives; to obtain the one and to avoid the Other. If then we see Men act directly contrary to this natural principle, and almost wholly neglect these things, not only when there is a fair appearance and Probability of their being true, which the Light of Nature it self affords; but also when there is all reasonable Evidence given, of their being Certainly true, by express Revelation in the Gospel; Is it not very plain, that such Men

are

are governed, not by reason and the force of Evidence, but by some Other very different Cause of their Actions?

What that Cause is, is very apparent from the Lives and Actions of most of those persons, who pretend want of Evidence to be the ground of their Infidelity. Their Lusts, their Appetites, their Affections are interested: They are Lovers of Vice and Debauchery, and slaves to Evil Habits and Customs: And therefore they are not willing to discern the Evidence, which would compel them to believe That, which yet they cannot believe with any Comfort, so long as they resolve not to part with their beloved Vices. Their hearts and affections are habitually fixt upon things here below; and therefore they will not attend to the force of any Argument, that would raise their Affections to things above. They are enslaved to the sensual pleasures and sinful enjoyments of Earth; and therefore they will not hearken to any reasonable conviction, which would persuade them to relinquish these present gratifications, for the future and more Spiritual joys of Heaven. The Love of this present World has * blinded their Eyes; and therefore they receive not the Things of the Spirit

But that Wickedness and un-governed Lusts, are the only Causes of obstinate Infidelity.

1 Cor. 2, 14.

* "Εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα
of

ἔχον τις ὁφθαλμοὺς, καὶ
μὴ βλέποντας τὸ φῶς, καὶ
οὐκ οἶδον, "Οὕτω καὶ σὺ, ὁ
ἄνθρωπε, ἔχεις ὑποκρυ-
μένους τὰς ὁφθαλμοὺς
τῆς ψυχῆς σου ὑπὸ τῶν
ἀμαρτημάτων καὶ τοῦ πᾶ-
ρτος, ὥστε τὸν πῶν πορνῶν.
Theophil. Antioch. l. 1.

of God; For they are
foolishness unto them; nei-
ther can they know them,
because they are spiritually
discerned. In a Word: The
true and only reason, why
Men love darkness rather
than light; is, because their
Deeds are evil.

And so
long as
Men are
under the
Dominion
of their
Lusts, they
would not
be convin-
ced, though
the evi-
dence of
Religion
was even
much
stronger
than it is.

And This reason, affords a sufficient
Account indeed, why Men should
be very unwilling to believe the Do-
ctrines of Christianity. If they are
resolved not to reform their Lives,
'tis no wonder they care not to dis-
cern the Evidence of those Truths,
which must needs make them very
uneasy in the midst of the enjoy-
ment of all their sinful Pleasures. In
this case, were the Proofs of the
Truth of our Religion much stronger
than they are, or than they can be
imagined or desired to be; yet still
these Men would be in the very
same case, and perpetually want strong-
er and stronger Evidence. 'Tis true;
many Men, who Now are conscious
and willing to acknowledge, that
they act contrary to all the reason-
able Evidence and Convictions of
Religion; are nevertheless very apt
to imagine within themselves, that if
the great Truths of Religion were
proved to them by some stronger
Evidence, they should by that means
be

be wrought upon to act otherwise than they do. But if the true reason why these Men act thus foolishly, is not because the *Doctrines of Religion* are not sufficiently evidenced, but because *They themselves* are, without allowing themselves time for Consideration, hurried away by some unruly Passions to act directly contrary to all Reason and Evidence; 'tis plain (unless God should irresistibly compel them) they might well continue to act as they do, though the Evidence of these things were really greater than it is. They are willing fondly to imagine, that if they had lived in our Saviour's time; if they had heard his Preaching, and seen his Miracles; if they had had the advantage of beholding those mighty Works, which he wrought for the proof of his Divine Commission; as the Jews then had: they should not like them have *rejected the counsel of God against themselves*, but with all cheerfulness have believed his Doctrine, and embraced his Religion. They fancy, they should immediately have become Disciples of Christ; and that the Truths which he taught, would have had a most powerful Influence upon the whole course of their Lives. And if their Hearts and Affections were not set upon *This World*, more than upon *the next*; if they valued not the *present enjoyments of Sense*, above the *expectation of the Glory that shall be revealed*; most certainly they would do the same *now*. But if

their Hearts *be* set upon earthly things, and their Passions *be* stronger than all the arguments of Reason; if they *do* indeed so love the Pleasures of Sin now, as that they cannot persuade themselves by all the Motives of Religion to live like Christians; we need not question to affirm, that they might very well have been in the same case, though they had lived in our Saviour's time. The Jews are a notorious and standing Instance, how far Prejudice, Envy, Pride and Affectation, are able to prevail over the strongest Convictions. When our Saviour began to preach that he was sent from God to instruct them in their Duty, they required a Sign of him, and they would believe him; but when he had wrought so many Miracles, that *even the World itself could not contain the Books if they should all be written*, they persisted still in their Infidelity. When they saw him hanging upon the Cross, and thought themselves secure of him, they said, *Let him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe him*: But when he arose out of the Grave, wherein he had lain three Days, which was a much greater and more convincing Miracle; they grew more hardened and obstinate in their Unbelief.

Mat. 27,
42.

Nay, not
even tho'
one should
rise on pur-
pose from
the Dead
to convince
em.

Others there are, who imagine, that if they could but be convinced of the Truth of another World by the appearance of one sent directly from that unknown State, they would immediately become new Creatures: But if God should

satisfy

satisfy their unreasonable Demands, by sending one on purpose from the Dead to convince them; there is little room to doubt, but as they hearkened not to *Moses and the Prophets*, to Christ and his Apostles; so *neither would they be persuaded by one rising on purpose from the Dead*. They might indeed be at first surprized and terrified, at the Appearance of so unusual and unexpected a Messenger: But as wicked Men upon a Bed of Sickness, at the amazing approach of Death and Eternity, resolve in the utmost anguish of Horrour and Despair, to amend their Lives and forsake their Sins; but as soon as the Terroure is over, and the danger of Death past, return to their old Habit of Sin and Folly; So it is more than probable, it would be in the present Case. Should God send a Messenger from the Dead, to assure Men of the Certainty of a future State, and the Danger of their present Wickedness; as soon as the fright was over, and their present terrible Apprehensions ceased, 'tis by no means impossible or improbable that their old vicious Habits and beloved Sins should again by degrees prevail over them. Some there are in our present Age, who pretend to be convinced of the Being of Spirits by the powerful demonstration of their own Senses; And yet we do not observe, that their Lives are more remarkably eminent for exemplary Piety, than other good Mens, who being convinced by the rational Evi-

dence of the Gospel, go on in a sober, constant, and regular Exercise of Virtue and Righteousness.

That therefore to make Men judge rightly of the Evidence of Religion, it is absolutely necessary in the first place, that laying aside Prejudice, Lust and Passions, they become impartially willing to embrace all Truth, and to obey all reasonable Obligations, which shall at any time be made known to them.

'Tis not therefore for want of sufficient Evidence, that Men disbelieve the great Truths of Religion; but plainly for want of Integrity, and of dealing ingenuously and impartially with themselves; that they suffer not the Arguments of Religion to have that Weight and Influence upon them, which in the judgment of right reason they ought manifestly to have. So long as Men permit their Passions and Appetites to overrule their Reason, it is impossible they should have due Apprehensions in matters of Religion, or make any right and true Judgment concerning these things. Men that are strongly biassed and prejudiced even in *wordly affairs*, 'tis well known how hard and difficult it is for them to judge according to reason, and to suffer the arguments and evidences of truth to have their due Weight with them. How much more in *matters of Religion* which concern things future and remote from Sense, must it needs be, that Mens present Interests, Lust and Passions, will pervert their judgment, and blind their understandings! Wherefore, Men that pretend to be followers of right Reason, if they will judge truly of the reasonableness and credibility of the Christian Revelation, it is absolutely necessary that in the first place, in order to that End, they become impartially wil-

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ling to embrace whatever shall upon the whole appear to be agreeable to Reason and Truth, and grounded upon good Evidence, without interesting their Lusts and Appetites in the judgment; and that before all things they resolve to be guided in all their Actions, by whatever Rule shall at any time be well proved to them to be the Will of God. And when they have put themselves into this Temper and Frame of Mind, then let them try if they can any longer reject the Evidence of the Gospel. *If any Man will do his will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God. For, them that are meek, God will guide in judgment; and such as are gentle, them he will learn his way.*

Joh. 7, 17

Ps. 25, 8.

Indeed, Men that are of this good Disposition, willing to be governed by Reason, and not prejudiced by Lusts and Vicious Appetites; could not but give their Assent to the Doctrines of Christianity, upon account of the very intrinsic Excellency and Reasonableness of the Things themselves, even though the external Evidence of their Certainty had been much less than it at present is. Nay, were there hardly any other Evidence at all, than barely the Excellency and Reasonableness and natural Probability of the great Truths of Religion, together with the consideration of the vast Importance of them; yet even in That Case it would be infinitely wisest and most agreeable to Reason, for Men to live according to the Rules of the Gospel;

That Men of such a Disposition would think it their greatest Wisdom to be truly religious, even though the Evidences of Religion were much less than they are.

pel: And though their Faith extended no further, than only to a Belief of the Possibility of the Truth of the Christian Revelation; yet even This alone ought in all reason to have weight enough to determine reasonable Creatures, to live soberly, righteously and godly. For, is it not plainly most reasonable, as*

* Nonne purior ratio est, ex duobus incertis & in ambigua expectatione pendentibus, id potius credere, quod aliquas spes ferat, quam quod nullas? In illo enim, periculi nihil est, si, quod dicitur imminere, cassum fiat & vacuum; in hoc, damnum est maximum (id est, salutis amissio,) si, cum tempus advenerit, aperiatur hoc fuisse mendacium. *Arnob. adv. Gentes, lib. 2.*

an Antient Writer expresses it, if each of the opposite Opinions were equally doubtful and uncertain, yet by all means to imbrace and entertain That which brings some Hope along with it, rather than that which brings none? For on one side of the Question there is no danger at all of incurring any Calamity, if that which we believe and expect, should at last prove false; But on the other side, there is the

greatest hazard in the World, the loss of eternal Life, if the opinion which Unbelievers rely upon, should at last prove an Error.

† Quid dicitis, o nescii, etiam fletu & miseratione dignissimi? ita non tam extimescitis, ne forte hæc vera sint, quæ sunt despectui vobis & prælent materiam risus? nec saltem vobiscum sub obscuris cogitationibus volvitis, ne, quod hoc die credere obstinata renuicis perversitate, redar-

And † again: What say ye, O ye ignorant Men, ye Men of miserable and most deplorable Folly? Can ye forbear fearing within your selves, that at least those things may possibly prove true, which ye now despise and mock at? Have ye not at least some misgivings of mind, least possibly That which ye now per-

versely

perſely and obſtinately reſuſe to believe, ye ſhould at laſt be convinced of by ſad experience, when it will be too late to repent? Neither is this the judgment of Chriſtian Writers only, but alſo of the wiſeſt and more conſiderate Heathens. We ought to ſpare no pains, ſaith || Plato, to obtain the Habits of Virtue and Wiſdom in this preſent Life; For the Prize is noble, and the Hope is very great. And * Cicero: They have gained a great Prize indeed, who have perſwaded themſelves to believe, that when Death comes, they ſhall periſh utterly; What comfort is there, What is there to be boaſted of, in that Opinion? And again: If after Death, ſaith † he, as ſome little and contemptible Philoſophers think, I ſhall be nothing; yet there is no danger, that when we are all dead, thoſe Philoſophers ſhould laugh at me for my Errour.

guar. ſerum tempus, & irrevocabilis poenitentia caſtiger? Id. ibid.

|| Χρη πάντα ποιεῖν ὥς ἀρετῆς καὶ φρονήσεως ἐν τῷ βίῳ μεταχειρῶν καὶ ἄν ᾖ τὸ εὖ θάλα, καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς μεγάλη. Plato in Phad.

* Præclarum nescio quid adepti sunt, qui didicerunt se, cum tempus mortis venisset, totos esse perituros. Quid habet ista res aut lætabile aut gloriosum? Cic. Tusc. Qu. lib. 1.

† Sin mortuus, ut quidam minui Philosophi censent, nihil sentiam; non vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui philosophi irrideant. Cic. de Senect.

But this is not Our Case. God has afforded Us, as has been largely and particularly shown in the foregoing Discourse, many and certain Proofs of the Truth of our Religion; even as certain, as any matter of Fact is capable of having. And we now exhort Men to believe, not

That God
may require
us to take
notice of
certain
things, and
to inquire
into them,
and consi-
der them,
at our pe-
ril.

what is barely possible, and excellent, and probable, and of the utmost importance in itself; but what moreover they have all the positive evidence, and all the reason in the World to oblige them to believe.

To conclude. No Man of reason can pretend to say, but God may require us, to take notice of some things at our perill to inquire into them, and to consider them thoroughly. And pretense of want of greater Evidence will not excuse Carelessness or unreasonable Prejudices; when God has vouchsafed us all That Evidence, which was either Fit for him to grant, or Reasonable for Men to desire; or indeed which the Nature of the Thing itself to be proved, was capable of.

F I N I S.

GEE 67

SEVERAL
LETTERS

TO THE
Reverend Dr. CLARKE,

FROM A
Gentleman in *Glocestershire*,

Relating to the

FIRST VOLUME

OF THE
Foregoing SERMONS;

WITH THE
DR'S ANSWERS
THEREUNTO.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *James Knapton*, at the Crown
in *St Paul's Church-Yard*. 1716.

LETTERS

TO THE
REVEREND DR. CLARK

FROM A
GENTLEMAN IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

RELATIVE TO THE
FIRST VOLUME

OF THE
FORGOTTEN SERMONS

WITH THE



DR. A. N. S. E. R. S.
THE FIRST VOLUME

LONDON
Printed by James Knapp, at the Great
in St Paul's Church

The FIRST LETTER.

Reverend Sir,

I Suppose you will wonder at the present trouble from one who is to you a perfect Stranger, tho' you are not so to him; but I hope the Occasion will excuse my Boldness. I have made it, Sir, my Business ever since I thought my Self capable of such sort of Reasoning, to prove to my Self the *Being and Attributes of God*; And being sensible that it's a matter of the last consequence, I endeavoured after a *demonstrative* Proof; not only more fully to satisfy my own Mind, but also in order to defend the great Truths of Natural Religion, and those of the Christian Revelation which follow from them, *against all Opposers*: But must own with concern, that hitherto I have been unsuccessful; and tho' I have got very *probable* Arguments, yet I can go but very little way with *Demonstration* in the proof of those things. When at first your Book on those Subjects (which by all, whom I have discoursed with, is so justly esteemed,) was recommended to me; I was in great hopes of having all my Enquiries answered: But since in some places, either thro' my not under-
standing,

The first Letter.

“standing your Meaning, or what else I know
 “not, even *That* has failed me; I almost de-
 “spair of ever arriving to *such* a Satisfaction as
 “I aim at, unless by the method I now use.
 “You can’t but know, Sir, that of *two* differ-
 “rent *expressions* of the *same* thing, tho’ equally
 “clear to *some* Persons, yet, to *others*, one of
 “them is sometimes very obscure, tho’ the o-
 “ther be perfectly intelligible. Perhaps this
 “may be my Case here; and could I see those
 “of your Arguments, of which I doubt, dif-
 “ferently proposed, possibly I might yield a
 “ready assent to them. This, Sir, I cannot
 “but think a sufficient Excuse for the present
 “Trouble; it being such an one as I hope may
 “prevail for an Answer, with one who seems
 “to aim at nothing more than that good Work
 “of instructing others.

* pag. 45, “In your *Demonstration of the Being and Attr-*
 Edit. 4th. “*butes of God*, Prop. VI. * [Edit. 2d. p. 69 and
 “70,] you propose to prove the *Infinitude* and
 “*Omnipresency* of the Self-existent Being. The
 “former part of the proof, seems highly proba-
 “ble; but the latter part, which seems to aim
 “at Demonstration, is not to me convincing.
 “The latter part of the Paragraph is, if I
 “mistake not, an *entire Argument* of it self
 “which runs thus:” To suppose a *Finite Being*
 “to be Self-Existent, is to say that it is a Contradiction
 “for That Being not to exist, the absence of
 “which may yet be conceived without a Contradiction;
 “which is the greatest absurdity in the World.
 “The Sense of those Words [the absence of which]
 “seems plainly to be determined by the follow-
 “ing Sentence, to mean its absence from any
 “particular place: Which Sentence, is to
 “prove it to be an Absurdity; and is this:
 “For if a Being can, without a Contradiction, be
 absent

The first Letter.

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absent from one place ; it may, without a Contradiction, be absent from another place, and from all places. " Now, supposing this to be a

" Consequence, all that it proves is, that if
" a Being can without a Contradiction be
" absent from one place at one time, it [may
" without a Contradiction be absent from a-
" nother place, and so from all places, at dif-
" ferent times ; (for I cannot see, that if a Be-
" ing can be absent from one place at one time,
" therefore it may without a Contradiction be
" absent from all places at the same time, i. e.
" may cease to exist.) Now if it proves no
" more than this, I cannot see that it reduces
" the Supposition to any Absurdity. Suppose
" I could demonstrate, that any particular Man
" should live a Thousand Years; this Man
" might without a Contradiction be absent from
" one, and from all places, at different times ; but
" it would not from thence follow, that he
" might be absent from all places at the same
" time, i. e. that he might cease to exist. No ;
" this would be a Contradiction, because I am
" supposed to have demonstrated that he should
" live a Thousand Years. It would be exactly
" the same, if instead of a Thousand Years, I
" should say, for ever ; and the proof seems the
" same, whether it be applied to a Self-Existent
" or a Dependent Being.

" What else I have to offer, is in relation to
" your proof of the Self-Existent Being, that
" he must of necessity be but One. Your proof
" is as follows, in Prop. VII, * [Edit. 2d. * pag. 48,
" p. 74,] " To suppose two or more different Natures ^{Edit. 4th.}
existing of themselves, necessarily and independent
from each other, implies this plain Contradiction ;
that each of them being independent from the other,
they may either of them be supposed to exist Alone ;
so

The first Letter.

so that it will be no Contradiction to imagine the other not to exist, and consequently neither of them will be necessarily existing. "The Supposition indeed implies, that since each of these Beings are Independent from the other, they may either of them exist Alone, i. e. without any relation to or dependence on the other: But Where is the third Idea, to connect this Proposition and the following one, viz. so that it will be no Contradiction to imagine the other not to Exist? Were this a Consequence of the former Proposition, I allow it would be Demonstration, by the first Corollary of Prop. III, * [2d Edit. p. 26.] But since these two Propositions, [they may either of them be supposed to exist alone,] and, [so that it will be no Contradiction to imagine the other not to exist,] are very widely different; since likewise it is no immediate Consequence, that because Either may be supposed to exist independent from the other, therefore the other may be supposed not to exist at all; how is what was proposed, proved? That the Propositions are different, I think it plain; and whether there be an immediate connexion, every body that reads yours must judge for themselves. I must say, for my own part, the Absurdity do's not appear at first sight, any more than the Absurdity of saying that the Angles below the Base in an Isosceles Triangle are unequal; which tho' it is absolutely false, yet I suppose no one will lay down the contrary for an Axiom, because, tho' it is true, yet there is need of a Proof to make it appear so.

"Perhaps it may be answered, that I have not rightly explained the words, to exist alone. And that they do not mean only, to exist independent from the other; but that existing

"Alone,

* pag. 16,
17. Edit.
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The first Letter.

7

" *Alone*, means that *nothing exists with it*. Whether this or the other was meant, I cannot determine: But, which ever it was, what I have said, will hold. For if this *last* be the Sense of those Words, [*they Either of them may be supposed to exist alone*], it indeed implies that it will be no Contradiction to suppose the other *not to exist*: But then I ask, how come these two Propositions to be *connected*; that to suppose *two different Natures existing of themselves necessarily and independent from each other*, implies that *each* of them may be supposed to *exist Alone* in *This* Sense? Which is exactly the same as I said before, only applied to different Sentences. So that if *Existing Alone*, be understood as I *first* took it; I allow it is implied in the *Supposition*; but cannot see that the *Consequence* is, that it will be no Contradiction to suppose the other *not to exist*. But if the Words, *Existing Alone*, are meant in the *latter* Sense; I grant that if either of them may be *supposed* thus to *exist Alone*, it will be no Contradiction to *suppose* the other *not to exist*: But then I cannot see, that to suppose *two different Natures existing of themselves necessarily and independent from each other*, implies that *either* of them may be supposed to *exist Alone* in *This* Sense of the Words; but only, that *either* of them may be supposed to *exist without having any relation to the other*, and that there will be *no need of the existence of the One in order to the existence of the other*. But tho' upon this account, were there no other Principle of its existence, it might cease to exist; yet on the account of the necessity of its own nature, which is quite distinct from the other,

" 'tis

The first Letter.

" 'tis an absolute Absurdity to suppose it not
 " to exist.

" Thus, Sir, I have propos'd my Doubt,
 " with the reason of them. In which if I have
 " wrested your Words to another Sense than
 " what you design'd them, or in any respect
 " argu'd unfairly; I assure you it was without de-
 " sign. So I hope you will impute it to mistake.
 " And, if it will not be too great a Trouble, let
 " me once more beg the favour of a Line from
 " you, by which you will lay me under a par-
 " ticular Obligation to be, what, with the rest
 " of the World, I now am,

Reverend Sir,

Your much Obliged Servant, &c.

November the 4th

1713.

THE

THE ANSWER

TO THE

First Letter.

S I R,

ID Men who publish controversial Papers, accustom themselves to write with that Candour and Ingenuity, with which you propose your Difficulties; I am perswaded almost All Disputes might be very amicably terminated, either by Mens coming at last to agree in Opinion, or at least finding Reason to suffer each other friendly to differ.

Your *Two Objections* are very ingenious, and urged with great Strength and Acuteness. Yet I am not without hopes, of being able to give you *Satisfaction* in *Both* of them. To your first therefore, I answer, Whatever may, without a Contradiction, be absent from any one place at any one Time; may also, without a Contradiction, be absent from all Places at

Times. For, whatever is absolutely necessary at all, is absolutely necessary in every part of Space, and in every point of Duration. What can at any time be conceived possible to be absent from any One part of Space, may for the same reason, [*viz.* the implying no Contradiction in the nature of Things,] be conceived possible to be absent from every Other part of Space at the same time; either by ceasing to be; or by supposing it never to have begun to be.

L I

Your

Your Instance about *demonstrating* a Man to live 1000 Years, is what (I think) led you *into* the Mistake; and is a good Instance to lead you *out of* it again. You may suppose a Man shall live 1000 Years, or God may reveal and promise he shall live 1000 Years; And upon That Supposition, it shall not be possible for the Man to be absent from all Places in any part of that time. Very true: But why shall it not be possible? Only because 'tis contrary to the Supposition, or to the Promise of God; but not contrary to the absolute Nature of Things, which it would be, if the Man existed necessarily, as every part of Space does. In Supposing you could demonstrate, a Man should live 1000 Years, or one Year; you make an impossible and contradictory Supposition. For though you may know certainly, (by Revelation suppose,) that he will live so long; yet This is only the Certainty, of a thing True in Fact, not in itself necessary: And Demonstration is applicable to nothing but what is necessary in itself, necessary in all Places and at all Times equally.

To your second Difficulty, I answer. What exists necessarily, not only must so exist Alone, as to be independent of any thing else; but (being Self-sufficient,) may also so exist Alone, as that every thing else may possibly (or without any Contradiction in the Nature of Things) be supposed not to exist at all; And consequently, (since That which may possibly be supposed not to exist at all is not necessarily existent,) No other thing Can necessarily exist. Whatever is necessarily Existing, there is Need of its existence in order to the supposal of the existence of any other Thing; so that nothing can possibly be supposed to exist, without presupposing and including antecedently the existence of that which is necessary.

the First Letter.

II

For instance: The Supposal of the existence of *any thing whatever*, includes necessarily a *Presupposition* of the existence of *Space and Time*; and if any thing could exist *without Space or Time*, it would follow that *Space and Time* were not *necessarily-existing*. Therefore, the supposing any thing *possibly to exist Alone*, so as not *necessarily* to include the *presupposal* of some *Other Thing*, proves demonstrably that *That Other thing* is not *Necessarily-existing*; because, *Whatever has Necessity of existence*, cannot possibly, in Any conception whatsoever, be supposed *Away*. There cannot possibly be Any Notion of the *existence of any Thing*, there cannot possibly be Any Notion of *existence at all*, but what shall necessarily *praeinclude* the Notion of *That which is Necessarily-existent*. And consequently the *Two Propositions* which you judged *independent*, are really *necessarily connected*. These sorts of things are indeed very difficult to *express*, and not easie to be *conceived* but by *very attentive Minds*: But to such as *can* and *will* attend, nothing (I think) is more demonstrably convictive.

If any thing still sticks with you in This, or any Other Part of my Books; I shall be very willing to be informed of it; who am,

SIR, Your assured Friend,

Nov. 10.

and Servant, S. C.

1713.

P. S. Many Readers, I observe, have misunderstood my *Second General Proposition*; as if the Words [*Some One unchangeable and independent Being,*] meant [*One Only—Being.*] Whereas the true Meaning, and all that the Argument *there* requires, is, [*Some One at least.*] That there can be *But One*, is the thing proved afterwards in the *Seventh Proposition*.

The SECOND LETTER.

Reverend Sir,

“ I Have often thought that the chief Occasions of Mens so much differing in their Opinions, were, either their not understanding each other; or else, that instead of ingenuously searching after Truth, they have made it their Business to find out Arguments for the Proof of what they have once asserted. However, it is certain there may be other Reasons for Persons not agreeing in their Opinions: And where it is so, I can’t but think with you, that they will find reason to suffer each other to differ friendly; every Man having a way of Thinking, in some respects, peculiarly his own.

“ I am sorry I must tell you, your Answers to my Objections are not satisfactory. The Reasons why I think them not so, are as follows.

“ You say; ” *whatever is absolutely necessary at all, is absolutely necessary in every part of Space, and in every point of Duration.* “ Were this evident, ’twould certainly prove what you bring it for; ” viz. that *whatever may without a Contradiction be absent from one place at one time, may also be absent from all places at all times.* “ But I do not conceive, that the Idea of Ubiquity is contained in the Idea of Self-Existence.

The Second Letter.

13

"istence, or *directly follows from it* ; any other-
 "wise, than as, whatever exists, must exist
 "somewhere. You add ; " *Whatever can at any*
time be conceived possibly to be absent from any one
part of Space, may for the same reason [viz. the
implying no Contradiction in the nature of things,]
be conceived possibly to be absent from every other
part of Space at the same time. " Now I cannot
 " see, that I can make these two Suppositions for
 " the same reason, or upon the same account.
 " The reason why I conceive this Being may
 " be absent from one place, is because it doth
 " not contradict the former Proof [drawn from
 " the nature of things,] in which I only proved
 " that it *must necessarily exist.* But the other
 " Supposition, viz. that I can conceive it
 " possible to be *absent from every part of Space*
 " *at one and the same time,* directly con-
 " tradicts the Proof that it *must exist*
 " **SOMEWHERE** ; and so is an Ex-
 " press Contradiction. Unless it be said, that
 " as when we have proved the three Angles
 " of a Triangle equal to two Right ones, That
 " relation of equality to two Right ones, will
 " be *where-ever* a Triangle exists ; so, when
 " we have proved the necessary Existence of a
 " Being, this Being must exist *Every where.*
 " But there is a great difference between these
 " two : The one being the Proof of a certain
 " relation, upon Supposition of such a Being's
 " Existence, with such particular Properties ;
 " and consequently where-ever this Being and
 " these Properties exist, this relation must
 " exist too : But from the Proof of the *necessa-*
 " *ry Existence* of a Being, 'tis no evident con-
 " sequence that it exists *Every where.* My u-
 " sing the Word *Demonstration*, instead of *Proof*
 " *which leaves no room for doubt,* was thro' neg-
 " ligence ;

The Second Letter.

"ligence; For I never heard of strict demon-
 "stration of Matter of Fact.

"In your Answer to my Second Difficulty, you
 "say; "whatever is necessarily-existing, there is
 "Need of its Existence in order to the supposal of the
 "Existence of any other thing." All the Consequen-
 "ces you draw from this Proposition, I see pro-
 "ved demonstrably; and consequently, that the
 "two Propositions I thought independent, are
 "closely connected. But how, or upon what ac-
 "count is there Need of the Existence of what-
 "ever is necessarily-existing, in order to the
 "Existence of any other thing? Is it as there
 "is Need of Space and Duration, in order to the
 "Existence of any thing; or is it needful only
 "as the Cause of the Existence of all other
 "things? If the former be said, as your In-
 "stance seems to intimate: I answer; Space
 "and Duration are very abstruse in their Na-
 "tures, and I think can't properly be called
 "Things, but are considered rather as Affections
 "which belong, and in the order of our Thoughts
 "are antecedently necessary, to the Existence of
 "all Things: And I can no more conceive how
 "a necessarily-existent Being can, on the same
 "account, or in the same manner as Space and
 "Duration are, be needful in order to the Ex-
 "istence of any other Being; than I can con-
 "ceive Extension attributed to a Thought: That
 "Idea no more belonging to a Thing existing,
 "than Extension belongs to Thought. But if the
 "latter be said, that there is Need of the Exist-
 "ence of whatever is a necessary Being, in or-
 "der to the Existence of any other thing; on-
 "ly as This necessary Being must be the Cause of
 "the Existence of all other things: I think this
 "is plainly begging the Question; For it sup-
 "poses that there is no Other Being exists, but
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The Second Letter.

15

"*what is Caused, and so not necessary; And on*
"*what Other account, or in what Other manner*
"*than one of these two, there can be Need of*
"*the Existence of a necessary Being in order to*
"*the Existence of any thing else, I cannot*
"*conceive.*

"Thus, Sir, you see I entirely agree with
"you in all the *Consequences* you have drawn
"from your *Suppositions*, but cannot see the
"Truth of the *Suppositions themselves.*

"I have aimed at nothing in my *Stile*, but
"only to be *intelligible*; being sensible that
"tis very difficult (as you observe) to express
"ones self on these sorts of *Subjects*, especi-
"ally to one who is altogether unaccustomed
"to write upon them.

"I have nothing at present more to add,
"but my sincerest Thanks for your Trouble
"in answering my Letter, and for your pro-
"fessed readiness to be acquainted with any
"other Difficulty that I may meet with in
"any of your Writings. I am willing to in-
"terpret this, as somewhat like a Promise of
"an Answer to what I have now written, if
"there be any thing in it which deserves one.

I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your most Obliged Humble Servant.

Nov. 23,

1713.

The ANSWER

TO THE

Second Letter.

S I R,

IT seems to Me, that the Reason why you do not apprehend *Ubiquity* to be necessarily connected with *Self-Existence*, is, because in the order of your Ideas, you first conceive a Being, (a *Finite Being*, suppose;) and then conceive *Self-existence* to be a Property of That Being; as the *Angles* are Properties of a Triangle, When a Triangle exists: Whereas, on the contrary, *Necessity of Existence*, not being a Property Consequent upon the Supposition of the Thing's existing, but Antecedently the Cause or Ground of That Existence; 'tis evident This Necessity, being not limited to any Antecedent Subject, as *Angles* are to a Triangle; but being itself Original, Absolute, and (in order of Nature) antecedent to all Existence; cannot but be every where, for the same Reason that it is any where. By applying this Reasoning to the Instance of Space; you will find that by Consequence it belongs truly to That Substance, whereof Space is a Property, as Duration also is. What you say about a Necessary Being existing Somewhere, supposes it to be Finite; and being Finite, supposes some Cause with determined that such a certain Quantity of That Being should exist, neither more or less: And That Cause, must either be a Voluntary Cause; or else

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the Second Letter.

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else such a necessary Cause, the Quantity of whose Power must be determined and limited by some Other Cause. But in original absolute Necessity, antecedent (in order of Nature) to the existence of any thing ; nothing of all This, can have place ; but the Necessity is, necessarily every where alike.

Concerning the Second Difficulty, I answer, *That which exists necessarily, is Needful to the existence of any other thing ; Not considered Now as a Cause, (for That indeed is begging the Question,) but as a sine qua non ; in the Sense as Space is necessary to every thing, and nothing can possibly be conceived to exist, without thereby presupposing Space : Which therefore apprehend to be a Property of the Self-existent Substance ; and that, by being evidently necessary itself, it proves that the Substance, of which it is a Property, must also be necessary ; Necessary both in itself, and needful to the existence of any thing else whatsoever. Extension indeed does not belong to Thought, because Thought is not a Being ; But there is Need of Extension to the existence of every Being, to a Being which has or has not Thought, or any other Quality whatsoever.*

I am, Sir,

Your real Friend and Servant.

London, Nov.

28. 1713.

The

The THIRD LETTER.

Reverend Sir,

" I Don't very well understand your Meaning,
 " When you say that you think, in the order
 " of my Idea's I first conceive a Being, (finite sup-
 " pose,) to exist, and then conceive Self-ex-
 " istence to be a Property of That Being. If you
 " mean, that I first suppose a finite Being to
 " exist I know not why; affirming necessity of
 " Existence, to be only a consequent of its Ex-
 " istence; and that, when I have supposed it Fi-
 " nite, I very safely conclude it is not Infinite;
 " I am utterly at a loss, upon what Expres-
 " sions in my Letter this Conjecture can be
 " founded. But if you mean, that I first
 " of all, prove a Being to Exist from eternity,
 " and then, from the reasons of things, prove
 " that such a Being must be eternally Necessary;
 " I freely own it: Neither do I conceive it to
 " be irregular or absurd; for there is a great
 " difference between the order in which things
 " exist, and the order in which I prove to my
 " self that they exist. Neither do I think my
 " saying a necessary Being exists Somewhere,
 " supposes it to be finite; it only supposes that
 " this Being exists in Space, without determi-
 " ning whether here, or there, or every where.

" To my second Objection, you say: That
 " which exists necessarily, is needful to the Exist-

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The Third Letter.

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"ence of any other thing, as a *sine qua non*; in the
"sense Space is necessary to every thing: Which
"is proved (you say) by This Consideration, that
"Space is a property of the Self-existent Substance;
"and, being both Necessary in it self, and need-
"ful to the Existence of every thing else, conse-
"quently the Substance, of which it is a property,
"must be so too. Space, I own, is in one Sense
"a property of the Self-existent Substance;
"but, in the same Sense, 'tis also a property
"of all other Substances. The only difference
"is in respect to the Quantity. And since e-
"very part of Space, as well as the whole,
"is necessary; every Substance consequently
"must be Self-existent, because it hath this
"Self-existent property. Which since you will
"not admit for true; if it directly follows
"from your Arguments, they cannot be con-
"clusive.

"What you say under the first Head, proves
"(I think) to a very great probability, tho'
"not to Me with the evidence of Demonstra-
"tion: But your Arguments under the second,
"I am not able to see the force of.

"I am so far from being pleased, that I can
"form Objections to your Arguments; that,
"beside the Satisfaction it would have given
"me in my own Mind, I should have thought
"it an Honour to have entred into your Rea-
"sonings, and seen the force of them. I can-
"not desire to trespass any more upon your
"better employed Time; so shall only add
"my hearty Thanks for your Trouble on my
"account, and that I am with the greatest re-
"spect,

Reverend Sir,

Dec. the 5th
1713.

Your most Obedt Humble Servant.

The

The ANSWER

TO THE

Third Letter,

SIR,

THough, when I turn my Thoughts every way, I fully persuade my self there is no defect in the *Argument it self*; yet in my *manner of Expression* I am satisfied there must be some want of clearness, when there remains any Difficulty to a Person of your Abilities and Sagacity. I did not *mean*, that your saying a necessary Being exists *Somewhere*, does necessarily suppose it to be *finite*; but that the *manner of Expression* is apt to excite in the Mind an Idea of a *Finite Being*, at the same time that you are thinking of a *Necessary Being*, without accurately attending to the *Nature of That Necessity* by which it exists. Necessity *absolute*, and *antecedent* (in order of Nature) to the Existence of Any Subject, has nothing to limit it; but, if it operates at all, (as it must needs do,) it must operate (if I may so speak,) *every where* and *at all times* alike. Determination of a particular *Quantity*, or particular *Time* or *Place* of Existence of any thing, cannot arise but from somewhat *external* to the thing itself. For Example: Why there should exist just such

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such a small determinate Quantity of *Matter*, neither *more* nor *less*, interspersed in the immense Vacuities of Space; no reason can be given: Nor can there be any thing in Nature, which could have *determined* a thing so indifferent in it self, as is the *Measure of that Quantity*, but only the *Will* of an *Intelligent and free Agent*. To suppose *Matter*, or any Other Substance, *necessarily-existing* in a *Finite determinate Quantity*; in an Inch-cube, for instance; or in *Any* certain number of Cube-Inches, and *no more*; is exactly the same Absurdity, as supposing it to exist *Necessarily*, and yet for a *Finite Duration* only: Which every one sees to be a plain Contradiction. The Argument is likewise the same, in the Question about the Original of *Motion*. *Motion* cannot be *necessarily-existing*; because, it being manifest that *All Determinations* of *Motion* are *equally possible* in themselves, the Original *Determination* of the *Motion* of any particular Body *this way* rather than the *contrary way*, could not be *necessary* in it self, but was either caused by the *Will* of an *Intelligent and Free Agent*, or else was an *Effect* produced and determined without *Any Cause at all*; Which is an express Contradiction: As I have shown in my *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*, pag. 24. [Edit. 4th.]

To the *Second Head* of Argument, I answer. *Space*, is a Property of the Self-existent Substance; but not of any other Substances. All Other Substances are *I N Space*, and are *penetrated* by it; but the Self-existent Substance is not *I N Space*, nor *penetrated* by it, but is it self (if I may so speak) the *Substratum* of *Space*, the *Ground* of the Existence of *Space* and *Duration* it self. Which [*Space and Duration*]

The Answer to the Third Letter.

ration] being evidently necessary, and yet
 Themselves not Substances but Properties; show
 evidently that the Substance, without which
 these Properties could not subsist, is itself
 much more (if that were possible) Necessary.
 And as Space and Duration are needful, (i. e.
sine quâ non.) to the Existence of every thing
 else; so consequently is the Substance, to which
 These Properties belong in that peculiar man-
 ner which I before mentioned.

I am, Sir,

Your Affectionate Friend

Decem. 10.

1713.

and Servant.

THE

The FOURTH LETTER.

Reverend Sir,

“ **W** Hatever is the Occasion of my not
“ seeing the Force of your Reasonings,
“ I cannot impute it to (what you do) the want
“ of *Clearness* in your Expression. I am too
“ well acquainted with my self, to think my
“ not understanding an Argument, a sufficient
“ Reason to conclude that it's either impro-
“ perly expressed, or not conclusive; un-
“ less I can clearly *Show* the Defect of it. 'Tis
“ with the greatest Satisfaction I must tell
“ you, that the more I reflect on your first Ar-
“ gument, the more I am convinced of the
“ Truth of it; and it now seems to me alto-
“ gether unreasonable to suppose *Absolute*
“ *Necessity* can have any Relation to *one Part*
“ of *Space* more than to *Another*; and if so,
“ an *Absolutely-necessary Being* must exist *every*
“ *where*.

“ I wish I was as well satisfied in respect to
“ the other. You say; all *Substances*, except the
“ *Self-existent one*, are *In Space*, and are penetra-
“ ted by it. All *Substances* doubtless, whether
“ *Body* or *Spirit*, exist *in Space*: But when I
“ say that a *Spirit* exists *in Space*, were I put
“ upon telling my meaning, I know not how
“ I

The Fourth Letter.

" I could do it any other way than by say-
 " ing, such a particular quantity of Space
 " terminates the Capacity of acting in finite Spi-
 " rits *at one and the same time*; so that they can-
 " not act beyond that determined Quantity.
 " Not but that I think there is *somewhat* in the
 " manner of Existence of *Spirits* in respect of
 " Space, that *more directly answers* to the manner
 " of the Existence of *Body*; but *what That is*, or
 " of the Manner of their existence, I cannot
 " possibly form an Idea. And it seems (if
 " possible) much more difficult to determine
 " what relation the Self-existent Being hath to
 " Space. To say he exists In Space, after the
 " same manner that other Substances do, (some-
 " what like which I too rashly asserted in my
 " last,) perhaps would be placing the Creator
 " too much on a level with the Creature; or
 " however, it is not plainly and evidently
 " true: And to say the Self-existent Substance
 " is the Substratum of Space, in the common
 " sense of the Word, is scarce intelligible, or
 " at least is not evident. Now tho' there may
 " be an hundred Relations distinct from either
 " of these; yet how we should come by Ideas
 " of them, I cannot conceive. We may
 " indeed have Ideas to the Words, and not al-
 " together depart from the common sense of
 " them, when we say the Self-existent Substance
 " is the Substratum of Space, or the Ground of
 " its existence: But I see no Reason to think
 " it True; because Space seems to me to be as
 " absolutely Self-existent as 'tis possible any thing
 " can be: So that, make what other Supposi-
 " tion you please, yet we cannot help sup-
 " posing Immense Space; because there must
 " be either an Infinity of Being, or (if you'll
 " allow the Expression) an Infinite Vacuity of
 " Being.

The Fourth Letter.

25

“*Being*. Perhaps it may be objected to this,
“that tho’ Space is really Necessary, yet the
“reason of its being Necessary, is its being a
“Property of the Self-existent Substance; and
“that It being so manifestly Necessary, and its
“dependence on the Self-existent Substance not so
“evident, we are ready to conclude it absolutely
“Self-existent, as well as necessary; and that
“this is the reason why the Idea of Space
“forces itself on our Minds antecedent to,
“and exclusive of, as (to the Ground of its
“existence) all other things. Now this, tho’
“it is really an *Objection*, yet is no direct *An-*
“swer to what I have said; because it sup-
“poses the only thing to be proved, viz. that
“the reason why Space is necessary, is its be-
“ing a Property of the Self-existent Substance.
“And supposing it not to be evident that Space
“is absolutely Self-existent, yet, while it is
“doubtful, we cannot argue as tho’ the contra-
“ry were certain, and we were sure that Space
“was only a Property of the Self-existent
“Substance. But now, if Space be not abso-
“lutely Independent, I don’t see what we can
“conclude is so: For ’tis manifestly Necessary
“Itself, as well as antecedently needful to the ex-
“istence of all other Things, not excepting (as
“I think) even the Self-existent Substance.

“All your Consequences I see follow de-
“monstrably from your Supposition; and
“were *That* evident, I believe it would serve
“to prove several other things as well as what
“you bring it for. Upon which account,
“I should be extremely pleased to see it proved
“by any one. For as I design the Search
“after Truth as the Business of my Life,
“I shall not be ashamed to learn from any

M m

“Person;

The Fourth Letter.

“ Person; tho’ at the same time I can’t
 “ but be sensible, that Instruction from
 “ some Men, is like the Gift of a Prince,
 “ it reflects an Honour on the Person on whom
 “ it lays an Obligation.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most Obliged Servant.

*Decem. the 16th,
 1713.*

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The ANSWER

TO THE

Fourth Letter.

S I R,

MY being out of Town most part of the Month of *January*, and some other accidental Avocations, hindred me from answering your Letter sooner. The Sum of the Difficulties it contains, is (I think) this: That 'tis difficult to determine, *what Relation the Self-existent Substance has to Space*: That to say It is the *Substratum of Space*, in the common Sense of the Word; is scarce intelligible, or, at least, is not evident: That *Space seems to be as Absolutely Self-Existent*, as 'tis possible any thing can be: And that *its being a Property of the Self-Existent Substance*; is supposing the thing that was to be Proved. This is entring indeed into the very bottom of the matter, and I will endeavour to give you as brief and clear an Answer as I can.

That the Self-Existent Substance is the *Substratum of Space*, or *Space a Property of the Self-Existent Substance*, are not perhaps very proper Expressions; nor is it easy to find such. But what I mean, is This. The Idea of *Space*, (as also of *Time or Duration*), is an *Abstract or Partial Idea*; An Idea of a certain *Quality or Relation*, which we evidently see to be necessa-

The Answer to the Fourth Letter.

rily existing; and yet which (not being itself a *Substance*,) at the same time necessarily *presupposes* a *Substance*, without which it could not exist; Which *Substance* consequently, must be itself (much more, if possible,) *necessarily Existing*. know not how to explain this so well, as by the following Similitude. A *Blind Man*, when he tries to frame to himself the *Idea* of *Body*, his *Idea* is nothing but that of *Hardness*. A *Man* that had *Eyes*, but no power of *Motion*, or sense of *Feeling* at all; when he tried to frame to himself the *Idea* of *Body*, his *Idea* would be nothing but that of *Colour*. Now as, in these cases, *Hardness* is not *Body*; and *Colour*, is not *Body*; but yet, to the Understanding of these Persons, those Properties necessarily *infer* the Being of a *Substance*, of which *Substance* itself the Persons have no *Idea*: So *Space* to *Us*, is not itself *Substance*, but it necessarily *infers* the Being of a *Substance*, which affects none of our *present* Senses; And being itself *Necessary*, it follows that the *Substance* which it *infers*, is (much more) *Necessary*.

I am, Sir,

Your affectionate Friend

Jan. 29.

1713.

and Servant.

THE

The FIFTH. LETTER.

Reverend Sir,

“YOU have very comprehensively expressed in six or seven Lines, all the Difficulties of my Letter; which I should have endeavoured to have made Shorter, had I not been afraid an improper Expression might possibly occasion a mistake of my Meaning. I am very glad, the Debate is come into so narrow a Compass; For I think now it entirely turns upon This, whether our *Ideas* of *Space* and *Duration* are *partial*, so as to *presuppose* the existence of some other Thing. Your Similitude of the Blind Man, is very *apt*, to explain your Meaning, (which I think I fully understand;) but do's not seem to come entirely up to the Matter. For, what is the reason that the Blind Man concludes there must be *Somewhat external*, to give him the Idea of *Hardness*? 'Tis because he supposes it impossible for him to be thus affected, unless there were some Cause of it; which Cause, should it be removed, the Effect would immediately cease too, and he would no more have the Idea of *Hardness*, but by Remembrance. Now to apply this, to the Instance of *Space* and *Duration*. Since a Man, from his having these *Ideas*, very justly concludes that there must be *somewhat External*, which is the

The Fifth Letter.

" Cause of them; consequently, should This
 " Cause (whatever it is) be taken away,
 " his Ideas would be so too: Therefore, if
 " *what is supposed to be the Cause* be removed,
 " and yet the *Idea* remains, *That Supposed*
 " *Cause* cannot be the *Real one*. Now, grant-
 " ing the Self-Existent Substance to be the
 " *Substratum* of these Ideas; could we make
 " the *Supposition* of its *ceasing to be*, yet *Space*
 " and *Duration* would still remain *unaltered*:
 " Which seems to show, that the Self-Exist-
 " ent Substance is not the *Substratum* of *Space*
 " and *Duration*. Nor would it be an Answer to
 " the Difficulty, to say that every *Property* of
 " the Self-Existent Substance, is as necessary
 " as the *Substance itself*; since That will on-
 " ly hold, *While the Substance itself exists*; For
 " there's implied in the Idea of a *Property*, an
 " impossibility of subsisting without it's *Sub-*
 " *stratum*. I grant, the *Supposition* is *absurd*:
 " But *how otherwise* can we know whether
 " any thing be a *Property* of such a Substance,
 " but by examining whether it would *cease to*
 " *be*, if its supposed Substance should do so?
 " Notwithstanding what I have now said, I
 " cannot say that I believe your Argument
 " *not conclusive*; for I must own my Ignorance,
 " that I am really at a loss about the nature
 " of *Space* and *Duration*. But did it plainly
 " appear that they were *Properties* of a *Sub-*
 " *stance*, we should have another way with the
 " Atheists: For it would at once prove de-
 " monstrably an *Eternal, Necessary, Self-existent*
 " *Being*; that there is *but One* such; and that
 " he is *needful* in order to the existence of all
 " other Things. Which makes me think, that
 " tho' it may be *true*, yet 'tis not *obvious* to
 " every Capacity: Otherwise 'twould have
 " been

Feb.

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The Fifth Letter.

31

“ been generally used, as a fundamental Argument for a proof of the Being of God.

“ I must add one thing more ; that your Argument for the Omnipresency of God, seemed always to me very probable. But being very desirous to have it appear demonstratively conclusive, I was sometimes forced to say what was not altogether my Opinion : Not that I did this for the sake of disputing, (for besides the particular disagreeableness of this to my own Temper, I should surely have chosen another person to have trifled with ;) but I did it to set off the Objection to Advantage, that it might be more fully answered. I heartily wish you as fair Treatment from your Opponents in Print, as I have had from you : Tho', I must own, I cannot see, in those that I have read, That unprejudiced Search after Truth, which I would have hoped for.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most Humble Servant.

Feb. 3.

1713.

M m 4

The

The ANSWER

TO THE

Fifth Letter.

S I R,

IN a multitude of Business, I mislaid your last Letter; and could not answer it, till it came again to my Hands by Chance. We seem to have pushed the Matter in question between us, as far as it will go; and upon the whole, I cannot but take notice, I have very seldom met with Persons so reasonable and unprejudiced as your self, in such Debates as these.

I think, all I need say in Answer to the Reasoning in your Letter, is; that your granting the Absurdity of the Supposition you were endeavouring to make, is consequently granting the necessary Truth of my Argument. If

* Ut partium Temporis ordo est immutabilis, sic etiam Ordo partium Spatii. Moveantur hæc de locis suis, & movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis. NEWTON. Princip. Mathemat. Schol. ad Definit. 8.

† Deus non est Æternitas vel Infinitas, sed æternus & infinitus; non est Duratio vel spatium, sed Durat & Adæst. Durat semper, & Adæst ubique; & existendo

* Space and Duration necessarily remain, even after they are supposed to be taken away; and be not (as 'tis plain they are not) Themselves Substances; then the † Substance, on whose Existence they depend, will necessarily remain likewise, even after it is supposed to be taken away: Which shows it to be an impossible and contradictory Supposition.

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the Fifth Letter.

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As to your Observation at the End of your Letter; that the Argument I have insisted on, if it were *obvious* to every Capacity, should have more frequently been used as a Fundamental Argument for a Proof of the Being of God: The *True Cause* why it has been seldom urged, is, I think, This: That the Universal Prevalency of *Cartes's* absurd Notions, (teaching that *Mat-ter* is necessarily *Infinite* and necessarily *Eternal*, and ascribing all things to mere *Mechanick* Laws of *Motion*, exclusive of *final Causes*, and of all *Will* and *Intelligence* and *Di-vine Providence* from the *Government* of the World;) hath incredibly blinded the Eyes of *Common Reason*, and prevented Men from discerning *Him in whom they live and move and have their Being*. The like has happened in some *Other* Instances. How universally have Men for many Ages believed, that *Eternity* is no *Duration* at all, and *Infinity* no *Amplitude*? Something of the like kind has happened in the matter of *Transubstantiation*, and (I think) in the *Scholastick* Notion of the *Trinity* &c.

I am, Sir,

Your Affectionate Friend and Servant.

Apr. 8.
1713.

THE

semper & ubique, Duratio-nem & Spatium, eternitatem & infinitatem, constituit. Cum unaquæq; Spatii particula, sit Semper; & unumquodq; Durationis indivisibile mo-mentum, Ubique; certe re-rum omnium Fabricator ac Dominus, non erit Nunquam Nusquam. Omnipresens est, non per Virtutem solam, sed etiam per substantiam: nam virtus sine substantiâ subsistere non potest. In ipso continentur & moventur Uni-versa, &c. NEWTON. Princip. Mathemat. Schol. general. sub finem.

|| Puto implicare contradiſi-onem, ut Mundus [meaning the Material World] sit Finitus. *Cartes. Epist. 69. Par-tis prima.*

Part of a

LETTER

Writ to Another Gentleman,
who had propos'd several
of the same Objections with
the foregoing.

S I R,

YOU will give me Leave, without any Preface or Apology, to propose directly the best Answer I can, to the Objections you have offered.

There are but Two ways, by which the Being, and All or Any of the Attributes of God can possibly be proved. The one, *a priori*; the other, *a posteriori*. The Proof *a posteriori*, † is level to All Mens Capacities: Because there is an endless gradation of wise and useful phenomena of Nature, from the most obvious to the most abstruse; which afford (at least a moral and reasonable) Proof of the Being of God, to the several Capacities of All unprejudiced Men, who have any Probity of Mind. And this is what (I suppose) God expects (as a Moral Governour,) that Moral Agents should be determined by.

† Rom. 1. 20; The invisible things of Him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his Eternal Power and Godhead.

The

The Proof *a priori*, is (I fully believe) strictly *demonstrative*; but (like numberless *Mathematical Demonstrations*;) capable of being understood by only a *few attentive Minds*; because 'tis of *Use*, only against *Learned and Metaphysical Difficulties*. And therefore it must never be expected, that this should be made obvious to the *Generality* of Men, any more than *Astronomy* or *Mathematics* can be.

This being premised in general, I proceed to the Particulars.

Concerning the Notion of *Self-existence*, I explain my self Thus. Of every thing that *Is*, there is a *Reason* which Now does, or Once or Always did, *determine* the *Existence* rather than the *Non-existence* of That Thing. Of That, which derives not its Being from Any Other thing, this *Reason* or *Ground* of Existence, (whether we can attain to any *Idea* of it, or no,) *must* be *In* the Thing itself. For though the bare proof by Ratiocination, that *there cannot but exist such a Being*; does not indeed give us any distinct *Notion* of Self-existence, but only shews the *Certainty* of the thing: Yet when once a thing is known, by reasoning *a posteriori*, to be *Certain*; it unavoidably follows that there *Is in Nature* a *Reason a priori*, (whether we can discover it or no,) of the Existence of That which we know cannot but exist. Since therefore, in That which derives not its Being from any Other Thing, the *Ground* or *Reason why* it *exists* rather than *not exists*, must be in the thing it self; and 'tis a plain Contradiction to suppose its own *Will*, by way of *efficient Cause*, to be the reason of its Existence; it remains that *absolute Necessity* (the same Necessity that is the Cause of the un-

unalterable *Proportion* between 2 and 4,) be by way of *Formal Cause*, the *Ground* of That Existence. And this Necessity, is indeed *antecedent*, though not in *Time*, yet in the *Order of Nature*, to the Existence of the Being itself: Whereas on the contrary, its own *Will*, is, in the *Order of Nature*, *subsequent* to the Supposition of the Existence of the Being; and therefore cannot be the *formal Cause* of that Existence.

Nothing can be more *absurd*, than to suppose that any thing (or any Circumstance of any thing) *is*; and yet that there be absolutely *no reason Why* it is, rather than *not*. 'Tis easy to conceive, that *We* may indeed be utterly ignorant of the *reasons*, or *grounds*, or *causes* of many things. But, that any thing *is*, and that there is a *real reason* in nature *why* it is, rather than *is not*; these two are as necessarily and essentially connected, as any two *Correlates* whatever, as *Height* and *Depth*, &c.

The Scholastick way of proving the Existence of the Self-existent Being, from the *absolute perfection of his Nature*; is *ὁσπερ ἀπὸ τοῦ*. For *All* or *Any Perfections*, *presuppose* Existence; Which is *Petitio Principii*. But *bare Necessity of Existence*, does not *presuppose*, but *infer*, Existence. That which exists by *absolute Necessity of Nature*, will always (whether you will or no) be *supposed* or *included* in any possible Idea of Things, even where you never so expressly *indeavour* to *exclude* it: Just as the *Proportion* between 2 and 4, remains *included* in the very Terms, wherein any Man would *indeavour* expressly to *deny* it.

To *exist at all*, and to *exist every where*, are the very same thing, where the *Cause* or *Ground*

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Ground of the Existence, is not either *confined* to, or *operates only in*, some particular Place. For 2 and 4. to have *at all* a certain proportion to each other, and to have That same Proportion *every where*; is the very same thing. And the like is true, of every thing that is *necessary in itself*. To suppose (as you suggest) that the Self-existent may be *limited* by its own Nature; is *præsupposing* a Nature, or *limiting Quality*: Whereas in this case, here must nothing be *præsupposed*; no Nature, no Quality whatsoever, but what *arises* (and consequently *everywhere alike*) from a *Necessity absolute in itself*, and antecedent (in the Order of our Ideas) to any Nature, Place, Quality, Time or Thing whatsoever.

When I say, that *Necessity absolutely such in itself*, has no relation to Time or Place: My meaning is, that it has no relation to, or dependence upon, any particular Time or Place, or *anything in any particular Time or Place*; but that it is the same in *All Time* and in *All Place*. What you mean by Time and Place being *finite*, I understand not. The Schoolmens Notion of Time's depending on the *Motions* or *Existence* of the Material World, is as *Senseless*, as the supposing it to depend on the *turning* or *not turning* of an *Hour-glass*. The same also is true of Place.

Infinite Space, is infinite *Extension*: and *Eternity*, is infinite *Duration*. They are the Two first and most obvious and simple Ideas, that every Man has in his mind. Time and Place, are the *sine qua non* of all other things, and of all other *Idea's*. To suppose Either of them *Finite*, is an express *Contradiction* in the Idea itself. No Man *does* or *can* possibly imagine Either of them to be *finite*; but only, either
by

by *non-attention*, or by *choice*, he attends perhaps to *Part* of his Idea, and forbears attending to the remainder. All the Difficulty that has ever arisen about this matter, is nothing but *Dust* thrown by mens using *Words* (or rather *Sounds only*) in their Philosophy, instead of *Ideas*. And the Arguments drawn from the *Far-gon* of the Schoolmen, will equally prove every *Axiom* in *Euclid*, to be *uncertain* and *intelligible*.

They who remove the Idea of *Infinity*, (or of a *Being* whose Attribute *Infinity* is,) by supposing *Space* to be nothing but a relation between two *Bodies*; are guilty of the *Absurdity* of supposing That, which is *Nothing*, to have real *Qualities*. For the *Space* which is between two *Bodies*, is always unalterably just what it was; and has the very same *Dimensions*, *Quantity*, and *Figure*; whether *These* or any other *Bodies* be there, or any where else, or not at all:

Just as *Time* or *Duration* is the same, whether you turn your *Hour-Glass*; or no; or whether the *Sun* moves, or stands still; or whether there was, or was not *Any Sun* or any *Material World* at all.

* Eadem est Duratio seu perseverantia Existentiæ rerum; five Motus sint celeres, five tardi, five nulli. N E W-T O N. Princip. Mathem. Schol. ad Definit. 8.

The Schoolmens Distinctions, about *Spirits* existing in *Ubi*, and not in *loco*; are mere empty *Sounds*, without any manner of signification.

To set *Bounds* to *Space*, is to suppose it bounded by something which itself takes up *Space*; And That's a *Contradiction*: Or else that 'tis bounded by *Nothing*; and then the Idea of *That Nothing*, will still be *Space*: Which is another *Contradiction*. Beings which exist in *Time* and in *Space*, (as every finite thing must needs do,) presuppose *Time* and *Space*: But *That Being*

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the Sixth Letter.

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ing, whose Existence makes Duration and Space, must be infinite and eternal, because Duration and Space can have no Bounds. Not, that Duration and Space are the Formal Cause of That Existence; but, that necessary Attributes do necessarily and inseparably infer, or show to us, a Necessary Substance; of which Substance itself we have no Image, because 'tis the Object of none of our Senses: But we perceive its Existence by its Effects; and the Necessity of that Existence, by the Necessity of certain Attributes, and by other Arguments of Reason and Inference. To suppose Space removed, destroyed, or taken away; amounts to the absurd Supposition of removing a thing away from itself. That is: If in your imagination you annihilate the Whole of Infinite Space, the Whole Infinite Space will still remain; and if you annihilate any Part of it, That Part will still necessarily remain; as appears by the unmoved situation, of the Rest. And to suppose it divided or Divisible, amounts to the same Contradiction.

The Objection, of Immensity being inconsistent with Spirituality and Simplicity; arises merely from the Jargon of the Schoolmen: Who (in order to help out Transubstantiation) have used themselves to speak of This and of many Other things, in Phrases which had no Meaning or Ideas belonging to them. By denying the real Immensity and the real Eternal Duration of God, they in true Consequence (though 'tis reasonable to suppose they saw not That Consequence,) denied his Being. The Immensity of Space, (it being throughout absolutely uniform and essentially indivisible,) is no more inconsistent with Simplicity; than the uniform successive flowing of the Parts of Duration,

The Answer to

ration, (as you most rightly observe,) are inconsistent with *Simplicity*. There is no Difficulty at all in This Point, but a mere *Prejudice*, and *False Notion* of *Simplicity*.

As to *Spirituality*: The Individual Consciousness of the One Immense Being, is as truly *One*; as the present Moment of Time is *individually One*, in all places at once: And the One can no more properly be said to be an *Ell* or a *Mile* of *Consciousness*, (which is the Sum of your Objection,) than the Other can be said to be an *Ell* or a *Mile* of *Time*. This Suggestion, seems to deserve *particular* consideration.

To the Objection, that the supposing God to be really and *substantially* Omnipresent, is supposing him to be the *Soul of the World*: I answer; This is a great Mistake. For the Word, *Soul*, signifies a *Part* of a *Whole*, whereof *Body* is the *Other Part*; And they, being united, *mutually affect* each other, as *Parts* of the same *Whole*. But *God* is present to every part of the *Universe*, not as a *Soul*, but as a *Governour*; so as to *act upon* every thing, in what manner he pleases; himself *being acted upon* by *Nothing*.

What you suggest about *Space* having *no Parts*, because 'tis *Infinite*; is a mere *Quibble* indeed, and has nothing in it. The meaning of *Parts*, (in Questions of This Nature,) is, *separable, compounded, un-united Parts*, such as are the *Parts of Matter*: Which, for That reason, is always a *Compound*, not a *simple Substance*. Nor *Matter* is *One Substance*, but a *Heap of Substances*. And That I take to be the Reason, why *Matter* is a Subject *incapable of Thought*. Not because 'tis *extended*; but because it's *Parts* are *distinct Substances*, *un-united*, and *independent on each other*. Which (I suppose) is not the Case of *Other Substances*. The

Kinds

the Sixth Letter.

41

Kinds of Substance may perhaps be *more* and *more different* from each other, than we (at present,) for want of *more Senses*, are aware of. *Matter* and *Spirit*, is no other Division, than *Matter* and *not-Matter*: Just as if one should divide the Species of Animals, into *Horses* and *not-Horses*.

As to the Question, why *absolute Necessity* will not admit of the Existence of *Two distinct Independent Beings*, as well as of *different Attributes and Properties in One Independent Being*: I answer; *Absolute Necessity*, in which there is no where any *Variation*, cannot be the Ground of Existence of a *Number of Finite Beings*, however agreeing and harmonious; because That (viz. *Number*, or *Finiteness*;) is itself a manifest *Difformity* or *Inequality*. But it may be the Ground of Existence of *One Uniform infinite Being*. The *different Attributes* of which One Uniform Being, are not a *Variety of Parts*, or an *un-Uniformness* (if I may so speak) of the Necessity by which it exists; but they are *All* and *Each* of them *Attributes* of the *Whole*, *Attributes* of the *One simple infinite Being*: Just as the Powers of *Hearing* and *Seeing*, are not *Inequalities* or *Difformities* in the *Soul of Man*; but each of them, Powers of the *Whole Soul*.

As to the *Last Argument* you refer to: My Meaning therein is This; that 'tis a Contradiction to suppose *Two* (or more) *necessarily-existing* Beings; because *Each* of them, by the *Supposition*, being independent, and *sufficient* to itself, tho' the *Other* were supposed *not to exist*; they thereby *Each* of them *mutually destroy* the *supposed necessity* of the *Others* Existence; and consequently *Neither* of them indeed will be *necessary* or *Independent*. For instance: If *Matter*, or *Spirit*, or any *Other Substance*,

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The Answer to the Sixth Letter.

stance, could as possibly be conceived to exist without *That* in which they all exist, as *That* in which they all exist can be conceived to exist without *Them*; then there would be necessary-Existence on Neither part.

As to the Question concerning the possible Plurality of *Infinities*: 'Tis certainly true that the Infinity of Space, neither excludes *finite Bodies* nor *finite Spirits*, nor *infinite Body* nor *infinite Spirit*. But it excludes every thing of the same Kind, whether *finite* or *infinite*. Which is all that my Argument requires. There can be but *One Infinite Space*, and but *One Infinite Time*, and but *One Infinite Spirit*, (taking *Spirit* to mean a particular positive distinct Substance, and not the mere negative *non-matter*, of which their may be innumerable Kinds :) And (if *Matter* could be infinite) there could likewise be but *One infinite Body*; and so on. For *One Infinite* in all dimensions, exhausts always the whole possibility of *That Kind*, though it excludes not Others.

The *Ubi* of *Spirits*, being their *Perception* only; and the *Omnipresence* of God, being his *infinite Knowledge* only; are mere Words, without any *Sense* at all. And by the like Confusion, any thing may be said to be any thing; and we have in us no Principles of Knowledge at all, nor any Use either of Words or Ideas.

I am, Sir,

Your assured Friend

6 FEB 67 and Servant, &c.

F I N I S.

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